

# THE SATURDAY REVIEW

No. 3746. Vol. 144.

13 August 1927

[REGISTERED AS  
A NEWSPAPER]

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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES.**—The subscription to the SATURDAY REVIEW is 30s. per annum, post free. Cheques should be sent to the publisher at the above address. The paper is despatched in time to reach subscribers by the first post every Saturday.

## NOTES OF THE WEEK

FTER the Sacco and Vanzetti affair, with which we deal elsewhere, the most important news this week comes from Ireland, where Mr. De Valera and his forty-four colleagues unanimously decided late on Wednesday night to take the oath of allegiance and with it their seats in the Dail. The decision—occasioned by the Free State Government Electoral Amendment Bill, which requires every parliamentary candidate to declare before nomination that he will take the oath if elected—will have an immediate and profound effect on the political situation in the Free State. The position of Mr. Cosgrave's Government will be automatically rendered untenable. There is a probability of a working agreement between the Labour Party and Fianna Fail (Mr. De Valera's party) whereby Mr. Johnson, the Labour leader, will form a joint Government with the National League group, to which Fianna Fail will give its support without accepting seats in the Cabinet. How long such a combination lasted would depend on the goodwill of Capt. Redmond's group, which would hold the balance of power. In any case another general election seems likely to be precipitated in the near future. The outlook is not

brightened by the reflection that the adherence of Mr. De Valera and his followers to the oath will only be formal, and that their Republican aims, while remaining undiminished, will now be afforded added opportunity of effectiveness.

It is probably a good thing that the delegates to the Three Power Naval Conference separated without reaching an agreement of any kind, for a compromise arrived at unwillingly and at the last moment would have caused distrust and suspicion in the United States, where a wholly unexpected modesty leads people to believe that their diplomats are never a match for the diplomats of Europe. There is now, in London and Washington, a growing realization of the loss of prestige that has resulted from the failure to agree, and General Dawes, the American Vice-President, sounded the right note at the opening of the Peace Bridge between Canada and the United States when he insisted that the Geneva meeting was merely one incident in the steady onward march of the principle of disarmament by agreement. It has been so grave an incident that it must not be repeated, and since General Dawes himself recognized that the conference had failed partly because there had been no preparatory work, its repetition seems improbable. The one consoling feature is

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that the danger of an Anglo-American armaments race is not a pressing one, although no decision in favour of a naval holiday has been possible.

The words of Lord Grey of Fallodon on the failure at Geneva are entitled for many and obvious reasons to the most respectful attention, and the characteristic restraint of his letter to *The Times* does not lessen the force of his warning against renewal of negotiations about "parity" of seapower. "It is impossible for any British Government to set its hand to an agreement binding us to naval inferiority; it is becoming difficult for the United States Government to bind its people to anything that is not naval superiority." Lord Grey would have the British Government act, as before the war, on the supposition that there never can be hostilities between this country and the United States, and refrain from discussion of literal binding naval agreements between Great Britain and the United States. As he says, that need not mean that Great Britain and Japan or the United States and Japan are debarred from agreement: where inequality is acknowledged negotiations are easier than where "parity" is in question. Patience and an indirect approach to the problem are the most hopeful instruments that remain available.

One of the more immediate results of the breakdown of the Geneva conference will be that the League of Nations will have to abandon, for the time being at any rate, its hopes of bringing about a general reduction of armaments. Its technical experts have already done a great deal of steady preparatory work for a conference which it had been hoped to hold next spring. The Preparatory Commission was to have met again in November, when it would have before it the results of the Three Power Naval Conference—which of course was a League Conference only in so far as it met at the League's headquarters and made use of a few of the League's typists—but this meeting now seems superfluous. Great Britain should not, and will not, agree to sign a general convention for the reduction of armaments while her naval relationship to the United States remains undecided. Many people doubt whether public opinion is yet ripe for a general convention of this nature; those politicians who have talked most of disarmament will now be able to blame its failure on the United States and Great Britain.

Should the League Disarmament Conference not meet, or should it meet and fail, a serious situation will arise between France and Germany. Count Bernstorff at the sessions of the Preparatory Commission and more influential Germans elsewhere have made it clear that unless other European nations disarm their own country will arm. It was laid down in the Versailles Treaty, they insist, that German disarmament was merely a prelude to a general disarmament, and even did the Treaty contain no such proviso it is absurd to imagine that a Great Power will indefinitely accept a situation of military inferiority to the minor states of mushroom growth that surround her. The French Press is very agitated at the present moment by reports of the drastic reorgani-

zation of the Reichswehr. Many of these reports are exaggerated, but we have definite information that German moderates are finding it increasingly difficult, in view of disarmament and evacuation delays, to keep their own militarists in check.

Of Mr. Lloyd George's many claims to remembrance not the least effective is that he is the only man who has retired from the Premiership with an enormous political fund under his sole management and with journalistic properties valued at very nearly three million pounds. Six months ago, Lord Grey of Fallodon expressed the opinion of all who are concerned for the soundness of British political life in saying that the Lloyd George fund is "a very disturbing element, not merely in the Liberal Party, but in the politics of the country altogether"; and since then there has been much unanswered criticism. At length Mr. Lloyd George has found, in a professedly Conservative paper, the apologist he needs. Unfortunately for him, his champion suggests that if there is any tar in the business, both halves of the Coalition have it from the same brush. It is simply not true. Neither the formal Conservative denial of February nor that just issued was needed by informed people, who have long known that the two funds were always distinct, and that Lord Younger had neither cognizance of the means by which the Lloyd George fund was accumulated nor any share in its disposal. The Lloyd George fund remains unique. Lord Rosebery, Lord Balfour, Lord Oxford, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Baldwin have no experience of anything comparable to that fund.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley has suffered a good deal more than a long term of imprisonment in expiation of his offences, and we are not disposed to recall them to memory. He has spent a life-time in journalism of a sort, and we can understand that, financial considerations apart, his return to journalism was inevitable. We do not grudge him opportunities of writing on the questions of the day. But what are we to think of that kind of journalistic enterprise which makes his crime his chief asset, which lures him into exploiting his prison experiences for the delectation of a vulgar public? He or one of his sub-editors has had the impudence to suggest a parallel between him and Wilde; but there is no point of resemblance. Wilde produced a piece of literature which was not published till after his death, and which, despite some affectations, had artistic significance. The stuff that is being thrust on the public, week by week, over Mr. Bottomley's signature has so far no justification. It shows us, not a man going soberly back to the trade he knows, but a man making capital, at the earliest possible moment, out of his just punishment. The paper that enables him to do so has lowered the already low tradition of popular journalism.

The subsidence of an important commercial building in Cornhill, which might so easily have been accompanied by very heavy loss of life, has caused less disquietude than we should have expected. Londoners are apparently fatalistic enough to refrain from asking whether the

developments of heavy and rapid overground and underground traffic and of building methods involving deep excavation are not jeopardizing all old structures on main streets. For ourselves, we are not inclined to take the warning quite so calmly. Without imputing blame to anyone in particular, it must be described as surprising that operations entailing risk to neighbouring buildings should be begun without very definite and adequate precautions being taken, not only by those engaged on the operations, but also by those responsible for buildings in the vicinity. Some tightening up of protective machinery would seem to be needed, together with a less complacent spirit.

The Recorder of Manchester has very usefully drawn attention to the failure of many magistrates to act on the principles which the Departmental Committee of 1925 recommended in the treatment of young offenders. In the London area there is little to criticize; with the rarest exceptions, the Metropolitan magistrates have loyally used their power of placing young offenders, for whose reformation there is hope, on probation. The results have been very encouraging. Out of some 30,000 cases dealt with through the London Police Court Mission, nine-tenths have turned out well. With this example before them, certain provincial magistrates persist in sending young offenders to prison. They need a sharp reminder of the 1925 recommendations.

Will nothing teach sportsmanship to some of those who pursue stags in Western England? Months ago, when a poor, gallant creature swam out to sea and was captured by boat and killed, we published a justly fierce poem of protest by Mr. Humbert Wolfe, with a refrain echoing a fine West Country poem by Sir Henry Newbolt—"Satan, art tha sleepin' there below?" Satan is not sleeping as regards this particular matter. Another stag has been taken out at sea, with the aid of a motor-boat summoned by telephone, and butchered. The only way to stop this abomination is publicity for the name of the perpetrator, who should be hounded out of every hunt. We greatly regret that in the latest instance the name of the man who telephoned for the boat and organized the butchery has not been mentioned in the papers, and that it is thus open to him to associate with unsuspecting sportsmen.

The General Manager of the Southern Railway has done well in urging all members of the staff to be "helpful, informative and courteous." There is certainly some room for improvement in the bearing of porters and certain other classes of employees towards travellers whose dress and luggage inspire no hope of liberality in tips. But there is even more room for improvement in the conduct of those passengers who come to stations apparently without having consulted a time-table, neglect to use their eyes on notices and signs, and badger busy workers with idiotic questions. Elderly women appear to be the greatest experts in porter-baiting, and the very highest position is held by the type that, after learning where to change trains, asks whether she has to change. Six hours of replying to imbeciles is enough to fray any ordinary worker's temper. Still, we are all for training the staff to suffer fools gladly.

## THE PEACE BRIDGE

IT was a happy coincidence that took the Prince of Wales and Mr. Baldwin to America just after the failure at Geneva and brought about the meeting on the Peace Bridge with the Vice-President of the United States. It is a poor friendship between either nations or individuals that cannot tolerate any differences of opinion; rather is it the sign of true friendship when it can reconcile candour with partiality. Europe took a certain pleasure in the spectacle of England and the United States arguing with each other at Geneva, but our differences are not like those that divide Europe, and if neighbouring States in Europe managed their relations with anything like the success of Canada and the United States, there would be no problem of disarmament to solve.

The Peace Bridge over the Lake Erie end of Niagara River which the Prince opened last Sunday commemorates a century of peace between our two countries, and between Canada and the United States there has been not only peace but a most effective disarmament. The Great Lakes which are big enough for a most destructive naval war are neutralized by Treaty, and the four thousand miles of frontier between the United States and Canada which, under less happy conditions, would find work for armies on the European scale, are defenceless and disarmed. That is a considerable achievement which Europe may well envy and of which both nations are justly proud. There have been disputes from time to time, but never once has there been any danger to the disarmament of these frontiers.

General Dawes, the Vice-President, made a speech which for a ceremonial occasion was exceptionally full of meat. He began with the usual but none the less precious generalities about the bonds between the two nations—the language and the Common Law which we share, the same ideals of citizenship and the same political instincts. On the Common Law as a basis of unity the English lawyers who are on a visit to Canada will doubtless have much to say, but it is a very strong tie. The root conception of the Common Law is that you cannot have a State right based on injustice to the individual. The English system of Equity is concerned with a general interest whether of the State or of an idea of morality or justice; it has its origins in Tudor times, when our main anxiety was the consolidation of the central Power; if it developed the doctrine of the Trust, it also identified itself through the Court of Star Chamber with a State law as something that could override the rights of the individual. But in the Common Law it is the individual that matters, and it is on the Common Law that individual rights and political liberties are based, both here and in the United States. It was the great instrument of political liberty in England, and carried to America by the English colonists it has flourished there and, as General Dawes puts it, has made us both "hold to the common principle in government of individual liberty under the law." Whereas other nations distinguish between the law that defines the relations of citizens towards each other and another kind of law—the *droit administratif*—to

regulate the disputes of individuals with the State, England and America are alike in refusing to admit that there can be any State right based on an injustice to the individual. And this difference from the rest of the world colours their whole attitude to politics and makes them, when the crisis comes, natural allies independent of any Treaty. "When any differences among themselves assume real importance in the minds of the English-speaking peoples, there will come from their heart and conscience, inarticulate upon trivial things, a universal cry for peaceable and reasonable adjustment." So said General Dawes at the head of the Peace Bridge last Sunday and the truth has never been better put.

But General Dawes went further, and even gently criticized the method of approach to the problems at Geneva. He thinks—as we think—that more careful consideration should have been given beforehand by each of the parties to the necessities of the others, and that there was "too exclusive concentration on its own necessities which resulted in predetermined ultimata before a comparison of views had been made." These are remarkable words coming from a Vice-President who has obviously great ability and power of expression and may indeed one day be President. He does not advocate in so many words a preliminary conference between England and the United States before they take part in an international conference, but that in effect is what his suggestion amounts to. How else are you to avoid "predetermined ultimata"? Further, though he is careful to make these preliminary explorations of a subject a general recommendation and not one confined to this country and America, language has no meaning unless he also thinks that the preliminary conference between these two Powers is likely to produce a common policy, for he had already declared that the "instinct of self-preservation binds us together" and that "therein lies the ultimate guarantee of the safety and progress of Western civilization."

One must be careful not to stretch general ideas thrown out at a ceremonial occasion like this into specific proposals, for that would be to endanger the object that we all desire of closer co-operation between England and America in world policy. Anglo-American friendship is a plant that if we are wise we shall allow to grow of itself and neither over-coddle it nor yet always be pulling it up to see what sort of roots it is forming. None the less, this idea of preliminary conference between us on subjects of international discussion is very valuable and will, if it is acted on consistently, develop into something like an Entente between us—an Entente not expressed in the provisions of a Treaty but in the habit of never going into a conference with other Powers again until we know exactly how we stand towards each other and have done our best to concert a common policy.

We cannot undo the history of the last few years, but if we can establish the habit of consultation between us on world-affairs, England and America can gain the substance of what many of the best minds in both countries hoped for at the end of the war. Hard and fast agreements between us are not what is wanted even if they could be obtained; and the less often the word "alliance" is used the better our chance of obtaining the substance without the name.

## SACCO AND VANZETTI

HALF an hour before the time fixed for their execution, Sacco and Vanzetti, who were due to be electrocuted at Charlestown Gaol, Massachusetts, at midnight on Wednesday, were respite for twelve days. Thus has been extended for another short period the uncertainty in which these two unhappy men have existed since they were condemned to death, six years ago, for a crime which they are alleged to have committed in 1920. On the ways of justice in the State of Massachusetts it would not ordinarily be the business of those outside it to comment. But the principle involved in the trial and condemnation of, and the subsequent delays in the carrying out of the sentence on these two prisoners, have now become a world issue. Not since the Dreyfus case has opinion been so moved and shocked by a public trial. For more than six years Sacco and Vanzetti have lain under sentence of death. No fewer than eight attempts have been made to gain a new trial, each of them of necessity brought before the same judge. Whether or not these men are guilty of the crime for which they have been sentenced, a system which can keep two men in uncertainty of their fate for so long a period and then decide to kill them is one that must shock all sensitive persons.

But no one who has read the evidence given at the trial can fail to harbour grave doubts as to whether these men are, in fact, guilty of the crime for which they have been sentenced. A letter to *The Times* on Monday of this week puts the essential facts so well and so succinctly that it is impossible to improve upon it as a presentation of the case. We draw upon it freely here. In the first place, it is necessary to remove from the mind the fact that the accused persons were Communists. That, obviously, has—or ought to have—nothing to do with their trial for murder, though it demonstrably weighed heavily against them in the actual court proceedings in America. The crime for which they were sentenced was the murder in April, 1920, of a paymaster and guard in a shoe factory. The motive of the murder was robbery. The shots were fired by two men, who thereafter were driven away in a car by accomplices. The State evidence against the accused persons was based on two considerations: (1) that they were identified by "reliable witnesses" as having been seen in the car which drove off immediately after the murder, and (2) that their conduct after arrest was proof of guilty conscience.

To deal with these two points first, it must be noted that the evidence of identification was refuted by ninety-nine witnesses for the defence, and that strong alibis were established in the cases of both men. Sacco claimed that on the day of the murder (April 15) he was in Boston seeing about a passport to Italy, where he was planning shortly to return to visit his recently bereaved father. This statement was supported by an official of the Italian Consulate in Boston, who deposed that Sacco visited his Consulate at 2.15 p.m. Vanzetti's claim that on this date he was pursuing his customary trade as fish pedlar was substantiated by a number of witnesses who had been his customers that day. The evidence of more than one of the State witnesses who

claimed to identify the prisoners as the men seen in the car immediately after the murder is gravely suspect. As an example we may take the case of Mary E. Splaine, who was working in the second floor of a factory near by. Hearing the shot she ran to the window and saw the automobile passing. The window was between sixty and eighty feet from the road, the car was travelling at from fifteen to eighteen miles an hour, she saw it for a distance of only thirty feet and for a time which could not have exceeded three seconds, and from this hurried glimpse of a man previously unknown to her she was able to give a year later an extremely detailed description of him. This witness was one of the main supports of the prosecution. As to the conduct of the accused on arrest, it must be borne in mind that they were Reds and that at that time a particularly strong anti-Red campaign was being carried out in the country; also that a friend of theirs, sharing their political sympathies, had recently been found dead outside the Judicial Court in which he had been detained.

Against neither of the prisoners was there any previous court conviction. One of them was an industrious man with a family and a Savings Bank deposit, the other a fish pedlar never previously accused of crime. Between the time of the crime and of their arrest they made no attempt to escape, no attempt to hide their movements, no alterations in their customary mode of life; nor was any trace found of their having had possession of the monies to gain which the murders were committed. Finally, a "gangster" named Madeiros, one of a professional gang known as the Morelli gang, while lying under sentence of death for another crime but awaiting the result of appeal against his sentence, confessed to the murder for which Sacco and Vanzetti were condemned. In a dozen other ways evidence was forthcoming which threw grave doubt on the case for the prosecution.

The position is well summed up in the following quotation from a book with which all who are interested in the case should acquaint themselves.\*

In the light of all the information now available, which is the more probable truth: that Sacco and Vanzetti or the Morelli gang were the perpetrators of the Braintree murders? The Morelli theory accounts for all members of the Braintree murder gang; the Sacco-Vanzetti theory for only two, for it is conceded that if Madeiros was there, Sacco and Vanzetti were not. The Morelli theory accounts for all the bullets found in the dead men; the Sacco-Vanzetti theory for only one out of six. The Morelli explanation settles the motive, for the Morelli gang were criminals desperately in need of money for legal expenses pending their trial for felonies, whereas the Sacco-Vanzetti theory is unsupported by any motive. Moreover Madeiros's possession of \$2,800 accounts for his share of the booty, whereas not a penny has ever been traced to anybody or accounted for on the Sacco-Vanzetti theory. . . . The character of the Morelli gang fits the opinion of police investigators and the inherent facts of the situation, which tended to prove that the crime was the work of professionals, whereas the past character and record of Sacco and Vanzetti have always made it incredible that they should spontaneously become perpetrators of a bold murder, executed with the utmost expertness.

At the very least, then, there is a strong element of doubt; and where there remains a doubt it is surely a principle of justice that the accused should be given the benefit of it. There is a great deal more that might be said, but we have said enough to show the injustice and inhumanity of proceeding to the execution of these two men.

\* 'The Case of Sacco and Vanzetti.' By Felix Frankfurter. Boston: Little, Brown. \$1.00

## TEETH

THEY got into the carriage soon after passing the border—father, mother, child and dog. It is very difficult not to stare at people in railway carriages, and after a decent interval, during which they settled the dog under the seat, and themselves opposite, I found my eyes constantly wandering to their faces. The child had a smile that revealed the most imperfect and decayed set of first teeth that I had ever seen. It was the sort of mouth in which there will certainly be a complete "denture" before reaching the age of twenty-one. History in this case would be repeating itself, for both parents had also benefited by dental skill and had teeth that were superhumanly perfect except for the cruel revelation of the gum. When the mother, careful for her child's comfort and perhaps for her own peace of mind, produced from her pocket a large packet of sweets, at which the child sucked continuously for the next two hours, I underwent a severe mental conflict. The desire to aid, instruct and inform is strong in the hearts of many doctors and it needed great effort of self-control not to utter an urgent prayer on behalf of that poor child's teeth. Sweets between meals are a sure source of digestive trouble and the excessive use of sugar is one of the greatest causes of dental decay, if we can believe our teachers. Constant sucking helps to deform the jaw and the enamel can easily be chipped and scratched by hard sweets.

It was pointed out recently at the Edinburgh meeting of the British Medical Association that we really do know quite a lot about prevention of toothache and the sort of diet which will produce strong, useful teeth. The Scotch have been particularly blameworthy during the last generation in allowing the national dish of porridge to be eaten without an adequate supply of good, rich milk. Here there is a difficulty. If milk is drunk unboiled there is the risk of contracting tuberculosis, but on the other hand, if we boil the milk long enough to destroy these germs, it loses the properties which prevent rickets and dental decay. There is no room here to dilate on the need of a pure, clean, milk supply. Highlanders of old had strong fine teeth because they lived on such food as oatmeal with milk, fish of various kinds including salmon, and fresh vegetables. The work of Mrs. Mellanby on the development of teeth in puppies has proved beyond doubt that an adequate supply of cod-liver oil helps tremendously in the development of bone, though she was unable to produce true dental decay in any of the puppies. (Which reminds me of the fact that the only person in that railway carriage with really good teeth was the dog referred to above.) Bone formation depends on calcium salts being laid down and these in turn are dependent on an adequate amount of Vitamin D in the diet. This "vitamin" or accessory food substance is contained plentifully in cod-liver oil and to a less extent in butter, green vegetables and fat of meat. Adequate amounts (i.e., enough to prevent rickets or dental decay) vary with each individual, but it may require one or two teaspoonsfuls of cod-liver oil or  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of butter per day for a child of two years.

The proposal, made also at Edinburgh, to establish a Nutrition Board might lead to very far-reaching results in the history of health in these islands. The public at present is torn between the many conflicting views which are expressed in the daily Press, views that often are supported by slight evidence, or none at all, beyond the personal predilection of the writer. But while we do not wish to emulate the Americans in their absorption in health questions, it is certainly time that we made use of the knowledge which is at our disposal. I recently investigated how much butter, home-grown or imported, was consumed in these islands per week per head of the population, and it worked out at under half a pound— $5\frac{1}{2}$  oz., to be exact. Butter is essential in preventing rickets and dental

decay, and these figures mean that thousands of our population never buy it, with the result that children's nutrition fails and the ultimate burden falls on the taxpayer, since dental and other clinics are now maintained at public expense. Butter or cod-liver oil alone will not produce perfect dentition unless they are supplemented by a hard diet and thorough cleansing of the mouth. There are still many people in this country who do not yet know the use of the tooth brush, but if they eat hard enough food, their teeth may yet be in excellent condition; in fact, the tooth-brush that I find in general family use or employed for other domestic purposes such as cleaning the spokes of a bicycle wheel or blacking the boots, is hardly one than can be recommended.

Indeed, some medical and dental writers go so far as to maintain that it is this very use of the tooth brush which promotes the modern disease of pyorrhœa or pus in the gums. (See the *Lancet*, July 23.) The writer states: "The chronic cases are most evident in those who take care of their teeth, i.e., those who clean their mouths three or four times a day." He goes on to maintain that it is the septic tooth-brush which is at the root of the trouble, positively "at the root" by spreading infection from the mouth and rubbing it on the gums, because while there are always bacteria in the mouth, they are usually on the surface of the mucus membrane; as soon as scratches are made by violent use of the tooth-brush, infection is let in. I myself advocate keeping a brush immersed in a strong antiseptic solution whenever it is not in use. Of course, there are many dentists who will not agree with this theory, and there are those who maintain that pyorrhœa does not originate in the mouth but in the unhealthy condition of the blood. Whichever theory we may subscribe to, we can at least be certain that there is a "vicious circle" in disease, and the presence of pus in any parts of the body will produce a lowering of the general health.

Teeth are the source of much pain and expense to the community at the present time: it is reasonable to suppose that the dental profession is not so powerful a vested interest or so untouched by the promptings of humanity that it would oppose a preventive policy such as I have here outlined. Above all, we must begin with the expectant mother, and see to it that her diet is suitable and satisfying. Dietetic knowledge and dental inspections will do the rest.

HYGEIA

## CONVERSATION IN THE TRAIN

BY ERNEST DIMNET

**A**T Châteauroux the door of the compartment was opened at the last minute by a bearded gentleman of thirty-eight or forty, who plumped on the seat opposite me. I had to remonstrate that the seat belonged to another bearded gentleman who had been travelling down from Paris with me, and was now in the corridor buying the local newspapers. But the two men knew each other, and in less than five minutes I gathered that the new arrival was a country doctor while the other beard belonged to a budding politician.

**Doctor:** I hear you are going to contest Montluçon next year. You must be glad that the new Election Bill was passed. Much easier to canvass one constituency than race over four *arrondissements*. You can do it comfortably on one car and one speech. What will you say?

**Politician:** I have gone to Paris to get in touch with Maurice Sarraut and get the broad lines of a declaration. You know the Radical Party is famous for its discipline.

**Doctor:** Yes, one party, one vote, and, as you seem to hint, one party one speech. I am a Radical too,

but I never can talk of politics without laughing and you must excuse me. Well, the Radical speech . . .

**Politician:** . . . is simplicity itself, and can go home to the most stupid peasant. We want social peace and we want the enforcement of secular laws, and we want Locarno.

**Doctor:** Sounds well, indeed, but you must expect questions and even heckling. Do you include social insurance in social peace?

**Politician:** Certainly I do, but I need not say so. The bill is law and Poincaré is responsible for it, introduced it, defended it and passed it.

**Doctor:** My brother says that industry is hard hit by it, all the same. Over four billion francs of new taxes on industries is no joke. He says his bicycle tubes will not stand the burden of such taxation.

**Politician:** That the future will show. As I told you, we are not responsible for social insurance. We can say that the Radical Party supported Poincaré in this solely in the interest of *union sacrée*.

**Doctor:** No, you can't say that. Poincaré introduced the bill to secure the Radical vote on other issues. Do you notice that this train is almost empty?

**Politician:** Yes, people travel a lot less than they used to.

**Doctor:** People are not sick when they cannot afford to be. Raise transportation rates and people cease travelling. Make steel tubes an expensive commodity and people buy no more bicycles. Social peace may mean many things, but it may mean that among the number. Some Communist will tell you that Radical taxation may ultimately mean no work for working men, and nationalization alone enables industries to go on. To-day legislating means little else than taxing and taxing means less money for everybody.

**Politician:** You cannot say that of the planks in our platform concerning *laïcité* and Locarno.

**Doctor:** You are right there. After almost a hundred and fifty years peasants resent the ecclesiastical tithes as if they were still paying them. It is perfectly marvellous. They see with their own eyes that the *curé* is poorer than any of them, but if you speak of the Church as an element of political and economic oppression they will follow you. As a matter of fact, the Church means nothing, it does not exist: there are only poor country priests who lose ground every day. The same with Masonry. Catholics are afraid of it, but it never does a thing to them. Herriot threatens to do all sorts of terrible things, but then he goes to Meaux and preaches a regular sermon on Bossuet. The whole thing is a joke.

**Politician:** Not so much as you may think. But you admit it is the safest platform and this is what we are discussing now. Locarno is pretty safe too, you will admit.

**Doctor:** Yes, but I shall be surprised if this plank is not stolen from you. Nobody wants war. Colonel de Soubise is quite the man to raise his one arm in solemn asseveration that he loathes war more than anybody else. What does Poincaré say every time he has a chance? Identically the same things with Briand. Only Briand learned in Washington, seven years ago, that you must never mention national defence if you want people to believe you are a Pacifist, and he now acts up to the lesson he received.

**Politician:** Precisely. Some people can say some things, others cannot. Neither Poincaré nor Soubise can steal Locarno from us, simply because they pronounce the name in another manner. They never emphasize it, so the result is not obtained. Old Soubise can raise his one arm as much as he likes, the audience will know that I want peace while he wants what he calls national security.

**Doctor:** Speaking of Poincaré, what will you do if he is still in office next May when a Radical majority is returned, which it cannot but be? Will you keep him or can him?

**Politician:** hesitates one moment, then bends over

into the Doctor's beard and whispers something.

Doctor: I see. Oh! you will be elected, there is no doubt, and you can count on my good word. I wish all deputies were as obliging as you are.

Politician (glowing with pleasure): Thanks! Now let us turn tables for an instant; tell me what your speech would be if you were contesting Montluçon.

Doctor: My speech! Perfectly simple. I should promise the electors never to say a word in the Chamber about politics. You know Forest, the columnist in the *Matin*? A few years ago he ran for *conseiller général* at Versailles. At one of the meetings some fellow in the audience asked him what his political ticket was. "My political ticket!" he answered, "what business is that of yours? I am here to get a better autobus service between Versailles and Saint-Germain." I daresay most of my speeches would be devoted to the infamous condition of Route Nationale 143, which you will curse many times as you bump along it on your way to meetings. Then I should speak of a water distribution in all communes with a population above two thousand, of more visiting nurses, and of a clinic for tuberculosis in the Faubourg Saint-Marcel, where it is sadly needed. That would be my speech, short and to the point.

Politician: My dear man, even Colonel de Soubise would beat you if you came on with such a speech.

Doctor: Do you think so? Well, if I should see that things were getting bad, I should exclaim, "But oh! my dear countrymen, whatever the state of Road 143, if it leads us to Locarno, may its name or number be ever remembered!"

Politician (admiringly): Why! you have quite a gift. Even I should not have thought of that.

## THE MOSQUITO CATCHER

BY J. MURRAY ALLISON

THE Pink-footed Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher (*Culicicapa punctipes melancephalus caudamputata*) is widely distributed throughout the British Isles, reaching these shores in vast numbers punctually every year on April 1, just in time to provide material for paragraphs to a host of needy journalists at their wits' end for copy. The "Go-it," to give it the name by which it is generally known, differs from all other insectivorous birds in that it feeds only at night. Its strange habit of flying backwards when approaching its prey has been frequently observed by naturalists. This curious mannerism is undoubtedly intended to deceive its victims.

The feet and legs of the Pink-footed Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher are pink, its head is black, and it has no tail—none. The plumage, other than that which covers the head, is bright emerald green. (I have often thought that it is a pity that the words "emerald green" were not incorporated in the bird's name, thus obviating any necessity for detailed description.) Its length from the tip of its beak to the very end of its tiny parson's nose, which is destitute of feathers, is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. In 1874 one specimen was shot by Lord Gushington, which measured just  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Considerable excitement was occasioned at the time. The bird itself was set up by Trouncer's, of Tunbridge Wells, and, enclosed in a glass case, stood for many years in the gun-room at Gushington Manor.

Some discrepancy is observable in the accounts given by various field naturalists of the bird's note. Smigg says, "The 'Go-it's' cry resembles the faint crackle which falls upon the ear when listening to the mica splitter engaged upon his delicate and absorbing craft. It might be expressed as follows: 'Cr-cr-cr-rrr-cr-cr-

crik-crik-rrr-r.' " Yaller likens it unto "The snapping of a small pair of manicure scissors—s-s-s-snip snap s-s-s-s." Personally I should not compare the note to a crackle (however faint), nor to a snap (however delicate). It bears a greater resemblance, in my opinion, to the sound caused by the explosion of the myriads of tiny bubbles which constitute the cream-coloured froth or "head" caused by the too energetic pouring of a bottle of Guinness stout into a drinking vessel, like this: z-z-z-z-z-z-z-z-z. One thing, however, all are agreed upon; towards the end of the breeding season the note becomes fainter and much shorter, so faint, indeed, that it is completely obliterated by the hum of the Common Mosquito (*Culex pipiens*) which forms the Pink-footed Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher's sole article of diet.

The "Go-it" pairs for life, and begins nesting operations within a few minutes after reaching these islands. The nesting site varies considerably. Hollow trees, rabbit holes, church steeples, chimney stacks, gasometers and stadiums are freely patronized; and nests have been found in Acts of Parliament, the correspondence baskets in the Ministry of Pensions, the switch-boards of the Telephone Exchange and in Professor Marrowfat's beard. Many nests have been found on the buffers attached to the carriages of the Southern Railway. The nest, a little larger than an ordinary cricket ball, is domed. The outer portion is constructed of odd bits of wool, fibre, cotton, flax, jute and horsehair, cunningly interwoven with pieces of brightly-coloured paper. The labels on empty tins that once contained Mangle's orange marmalade, also the labels with which Messrs. Bull and Bravery identify their tomato catsup, are greatly prized by this jolly bird. Both males and females have been known to fly miles in search of perfect specimens.

The interior of the nest is cosily lined with the short fine threads torn from silk Persian prayer rugs of the sixteenth century by the ordinary household broom. Since the introduction of the automatic vacuum sweeper, which it is claimed "removes the dirt without destroying the fabric," the "Go-it" has been decreasing in numbers, owing no doubt to the scarcity of its favourite nesting material. All bird lovers should continue to press their M.P.s to insist that the scope of the Wild Birds Protection Act should be widened so as to give the authorities power to suppress the manufacture, distribution and sale of all automatic vacuum sweepers, lest this beautiful and highly diverting little songster disappears entirely from our woodlands, meadows, forests, gardens, moors, downs, mountains, hills, streams, lakes, rivers, hedges and ditches.

The "Go-it" lays but one egg, in size about as big as the nail upon the forefinger of the right hand of a decently educated man between thirty and thirty-five years of age. Some are a little smaller, some a little larger, and others a little larger still. The colouration of the egg of the Pink-footed, Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher varies enormously. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, is the proud possessor of a collection of "Go-it's" eggs numbering 283,421 different specimens, and no two of these eggs are alike. The ground colour may be white, black, blue, brown, yellow, grey, purple, red, orange, green, grey-green, grey-blue, blue-brown, violet-pink, red-brown, magenta-blue, yellow-orange, orange-yellow, snuff-coloured, plum-coloured, claret-coloured or the colour of elephant's breath. The egg has under-markings of faint purplish-violet, bluish-lavender, reddish-whitish-olive, yellowish curricoloured green, pinkish-greyish-tan, pewter-coloured ultramarine-ash, and a thousand other combinations. These faint under-markings are mottled, streaked, splashed, smudged, splattered, marbled, dotted, patterned, pied, dappled, powdered, speckled, flecked, studded, barred, veined, freckled, striped, patched, stippled, peppered, dashed, lined, blobbed and blazed

in vivid scarlet, ochre, primrose, cobalt, vermillion, vandyke brown, carmine, saffron, sapphire, lilac, Rose du Barry, green, purple, gamboge, rose madder, cadmium, magenta, topaz, citron and mauve. Indeed, it is quite impossible to catalogue all the variations of the extraordinary egg of this entrancing bird; as well attempt to describe the prismatic iridescence of the spectrum, rainbow, peacock, chameleon or mackerel.

The period of incubation lasts for fourteen days, and in a further two weeks the young Pink-footed Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher is fully fledged and ready to fend for itself. At this stage the behaviour of the young bird is remarkable. The first sign of approaching independence is the thrusting of the young bird's head through the aperture in the domed nest—round, like a cricket ball. As the young bird grows, its body fills the whole of the interior of the nest, through the bottom of which the youngster manages to work its feet and legs. At last the day arrives when the young "Go-it" manages to separate the nest from its lodgment. After a few staggering steps, most amusing to watch, the bird contrives to find its legs, and, still surrounded by the nest, his jolly little head and neck stretched well out of the aperture, he scampers over the lawn, nest and all, in search of food, for all the world like an animated coconut. (These peculiar antics have probably given the bird its popular name.) After a few adventurous days, the nest begins to fall away from the body, until at length, free from all encumbrances, the offspring joins its parents in the free air. The young Pink-footed Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher may be distinguished from the adult birds by his blue legs and feet, white head, red body and long yellow tail.

Towards the end of September the "Go-it" prepares to leave for its winter quarters, and usually at the end of the month the great southern migration is in full swing. Vast numbers of "Go-its" gather along the shores of the south coast of England awaiting a favourable opportunity to cross the water.

*Note.*—Since writing the above, I learn that the unique specimen of the Pink-legged Black-headed Bob-tailed Mosquito Catcher secured by Lord Gushington in 1874 has been acquired by the South Kensington Museum, where it may be seen by the public from 10.30 till 4.30 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

## A NEW TOBACCO

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

THE best thing that has happened here these last few days has been the arrival, through the post, of two pound tins of tobacco. Not that these were a gift; no such luck comes my way. I sometimes receive copies of new books from publishers, yet nobody ever sends me a review tin of new tobacco. Why is that? I am far more interested in new brands of smoking mixtures than I am in new samples of poetry or fiction mixtures. Why is it that people are so lavish with books, of which there are far, far too many in the world, and so mean about other things? Why cannot we have a weekly paper that reviews everything and not merely books? After all, who really *cares* about books? Let us have a paper that notices all the new things—wine, tobacco, hats, chairs, typewriters, gramophones, pianolas, and so on and so forth. Some of the things, of course, would not be really new; the wine, for example, would be old, but fresh samples would be sent in from time to time in order that the fortunate reviewer (for we will still call him that and

not "taster") might call attention once more to its virtues. On such a paper I would readily engage to do the pipe-tobacco column, and do it too in the good old style: "Among the younger Virginias, Smith's Light is rapidly," etc.; "Brown's is quickly proving itself a mixture to be reckoned with"; "Once you have taken up Dreadnought Plug, you cannot put it down—or keep it down." What a change it would be to have my table filled with strange bright tins of tobacco instead of books in gaudy jackets bristling with publishers' lies!

Now the tobacconists from whom I ordered these two pound tins steer clear of the bounce and brag and downright lying that is all too common in the literary, theatrical, musical and other worlds of to-day. They write me a modest little letter, in which they remark, "It is not for us to sing the praises of this tobacco, but we think you will find that it has an unusually fine flavour, and it is absolutely pure"; which is, after all, more than you could say of some of our recent attempts at literature, which are described as if they were the very summit of man's achievement on this planet. But what was I doing to be ordering tobacco in this way? The fact is, I made a most romantic discovery. For some time now, believing that a man should have some object in life, I have been looking for a pure Virginia, a quest that sounds, I think, sufficiently romantic in itself. Like many of my idle day-dreaming egotistical tribe, I am a heavy pipe-smoker, finding it necessary to stupefy myself with tobacco in order not to feel too acutely the pangs of injured vanity, the shame of poverty and obscurity, and the constant prickings of a Nonconformist conscience. However, I will not apologize for my pipe, for man, being terribly burdened with a consciousness, must dope himself in one way or another, and if he is not smoking or drinking he is making illicit love or denouncing something or somebody, delivering a message to all thinking men, passing unnecessary laws, drugging himself with a sense of power; so that it seems to me that my way of escaping the tedium of being conscious or the pain of thought is perhaps the least guilty, for smoky and blackened though I may be, I am at least amiable, puffing away.

Now my taste in tobacco inclines towards the Oriental. I delight in your full mixtures that are dark and heavily fragrant with Latakia and Perique, mixtures that hold the gorgeous East in fee. There was a time—you may say it was during my decadent period—when, determined to live only for the splendid moment, I smoked Latakia alone, like one of Ouida's heroes. Nor can I actually say that it seemed to do me any harm—though even tobacconists, who must make a handsome profit out of the stuff, cautioned me against it and regarded me as a chef might who was told that I ate nothing but Christmas pudding—but it is supposed to be bad for the heart and it is certainly rather cloying. Since then, I have tried innumerable tobaccos, but have usually kept to the full-flavoured mixtures that have one foot at least in Asia. Nevertheless I have always felt (prompted perhaps by some Puritan ancestor) that a man who smoked as much as I do should content himself with a pure Virginia. You notice that I do not give the adjective an initial capital: every sensible pipe-smoker will know why: pure Vir-

ginia tells you exactly what I wanted to find, the shape of the thing in my thoughts, and "Pure Virginia" does not. For some time, then, this has been my quest, undertaken without any flourish of trumpets, pursued quietly yet indefatigably. Unlike so many contemporaries of mine in authorship, bright but disillusioned fellows, I have had an object in life, and I do not hesitate to say that it has sustained me through many periods of great trial. It has also taken me into a great many queer little tobacconists' shops and filled my pouch and pipe with some very foul-smelling and evil-tasting stuff. If ever a man deserved the freedom of the city from Richmond, Va., merely for smoking his pipe, then I am that man. But there is, of course, plenty of respectable Virginia tobacco in the world, and I tried a number of brands that were fit to be smoked but that always stopped short of perfection, being too mild and monotonous, too heavy and parching, or, like the Clown's ginger, hot i' the mouth. Once or twice, even after a week's industrious smoking, I imagined that I had found what I wanted at last, that I need go no further, yet always my fancy went straying on, discovering that here was not perfection, and I would go back to my mixtures, never keeping to the same one long, or I would make further experiments with Virginia.

Such was the position when we motored back from the north the other week. I was still hopeful but a little subdued, beginning to trifle with disillusion or to turn Platonic and console myself with the thought of ideal Plugs and Navy Cuts. Now comes the stroke of fate or chance that is to be found in all good romantic narratives. We broke our journey down the Great North Road at Doncaster, and there I discovered that I had no tobacco at all. I did not regard this as a real opportunity for research but simply as the domestic crisis so familiar to all smokers, and I hurried across to the nearest tobacconist's as any common puffer of pipes, your nearest ounce-packet man, might have done. The shop was rather small and in no way to be distinguished from the ordinary. It happened, however, that the assistant was engaged when I entered and that gave me an opportunity, all too rare in these shops, to look round, or "browse," as they say in the bookshops. There was time for the mere hasty desire for fuel to be shredded away and clarified, for the instincts of the connoisseur, the collector, the explorer, to assert themselves. I cast about for a Virginia that held out the slightest promise, and when the assistant, who was a middle-aged man and not the all too frequent contemptuous female, came to attend to me, I asked him a few questions. The result was that I departed, sceptically I must confess, carrying a quarter-pound tin of a tobacco that he strongly recommended, a fine-cut rather dark Virginia. This tobacco is all that he said it was, very cool, sweet but not cloying (and therefore unlike those American plugs that seem to glisten with sugar and are like toffee), fairly lasting in spite of its being fine-cut; so good indeed that, as you know, I have just ordered two pounds of it and am puffing away at them this very moment.

I believe that I have found the tobacco I have long been looking for, but that does not mean that I shall necessarily stick to it. I have been told over and over again that it is better to keep to one brand of tobacco, and I am always meeting men

who have "never smoked anything else for thirty years, y'know" and never fail to admire their constancy, while admitting that I am the very Casanova of pipe-smokers. There is, however, something to be said for this chopping and changing. If you are for ever smoking something new, trying another brand or returning to it to see how it stands a comparison with the last you had, you contrive to raise what is generally a mere habit into a conscious pleasure. Most smokers—and this is certainly true of cigarette smokers—have what might be called a negative attitude and not a positive one towards the practice, by which I mean that they smoke only in order to free themselves from the restlessness and dissatisfaction they feel when not smoking. Now I do not say that I, who am equally a creature of the habit, would not feel such restlessness and dissatisfaction if I were deprived of my tobacco, but I do say that when I am smoking I am not merely, as it were, brought up to zero from a point below it. I am tasting and enjoying the tobacco all the time, fully conscious of its defects and excellences; and this is because I am for ever making experiments. And is it not strange that so little has been written about tobacco and the adventures of the smoker? I never come across anything on the subject except those general eulogies of the weed quoted so often by tobacconists, and purely technical treatises that mean nothing to people outside the trade. It is just as if all statements about books could be divided into observations such as that by Carlyle comparing a library to a university, and remarks about printing, proof-reading and binding. Why does not some enthusiastic but critical smoker artfully describe his traffic with the pipe, his nights of Latakia, Perique, Virginia? When so much is ending in it, why cannot we have a volume or two on smoke?

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.*

*Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach him by the first post on Wednesday.*

### THE FARM WORKER'S FUTURE

SIR,—Feeling as "Strix Flamma" says he feels, I find it difficult to understand why he so readily commits the folly, which he condemns, of wasting ink upon discussing agricultural conditions. Apparently he believes that he alone can speak with authority on these things, and that to him alone the crafty rustic shows his true opinions, but if he has grounds for this belief it would seem a pity that he has obscured his identity in anonymity. But interesting as the details which he gives of his next-door neighbours no doubt are, and his rendering of what they would or would not say to him in given circumstances, they would hardly seem to furnish a broad enough basis for his suggestion that small holdings are neither desired nor successful, or for his sweeping statement that they offer no opportunity for agricultural labourers, but are taken by amateurs who have failed in other callings. On this point I join issue with him and invite him to prove what he says.

In point of fact, the majority of statutory small-holders are recruited from workers on farms, and in such districts as Cumberland I am informed that a very high proportion of the non-statutory small farmers began as labourers. Last year the official total of

unsatisfied applicants for small-holdings was 14,847, and in fifteen months only fifty-seven holdings could be granted to them. In the teeth of such competition the applicants have difficulty to prove their suitability. Does "Strix Flammea" suggest that the County Councils select "amateurs who have failed in other callings"?

From Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Shropshire, I have seen and heard most encouraging reports of how well small-holders are doing in the face of the present depression, and the tendency in a number of instances is for them to be leaving their holdings for larger ones. Doubtless the same holds true of other counties, although I cannot speak from personal knowledge. Even in Carmarthenshire, the county which the lately published Agricultural Output Returns would suggest to be the least favourable to small-holders, Sir Francis Acland has just shown that small-holders there are better off in cash received than they would be as labourers. If "Strix Flammea" still doubts, let him go to Lord Lincolnshire's estate and see the 200 small-holders recruited from the estate labourers, or interview Mr. Charles Hughes, of Spalding, who will give him the names of agricultural labourers who took holdings and have since retired with a competence. Small-holding must be an easier job than most people think if "amateurs" and "failures in other callings" can do so well at it.

To examine the figures more closely, the 1908 Act settles 14,000 men on the land. In six years only 5% of these small-holders failed. The 1919 Act settled 22,000 small-holders, of which, owing to special circumstances arising from the war, a small proportion were admittedly "amateurs." Of the total, 10% have failed, and the principal reason given for the increase was the fact that some had had no previous experience, but it was stated that nearly all those with previous experience had made good. As a general rule, however, the committees granting these holdings made a strong point of applicants having some such experience, and in the vast majority of cases they had. For holdings granted now, committees demand some first-hand knowledge almost as a *sine qua non*. Therefore there is not one shred of truth in "Strix Flammea's" wild assertion that holdings are "mostly taken up by amateurs."

Lord Bledisloe, Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, made the following statement in the House of Lords last December:

I have become increasingly convinced that small-holdings are not merely desirable, but essential, if reasonable opportunity of advancement is to be provided for our more enterprising rural workers, if the output of our agricultural land is to be materially augmented, if industry, thrift and contentment are to vitalize our village life. ('Hansard,' 6/12/26.)

As regards Mr. Ryder's letter, I would indicate that the point of my article was not that higher wages should be paid now, but what could be done to keep men on the land in the future, and the possibility be avoided of a wage too high to be economic.

I am, etc.,

L. F. EASTERBROOK

Northbrook, Micheldever, Hants

#### THE "ALTERNATIVE PRAYER BOOK"

SIR,—The letter of Mr. A. G. Sowersby (in your issue of July 16) is an interesting stage in the growth of a legend.

1. In 1552 the legislators who proscribed the use of the older Book of 1549 courteously referred (in the Act of Uniformity) to the scrapped book as "a very godly order, set forth by authority of Parliament for Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments to be used in the Mother Tongue within the Church of England, agreeable to the Word of God and the

Primitive Church, very comfortable to all good people desiring to live in Christian Conversation." Grammatically, the adverbial clause commencing "agreeable" would appear to relate to the use of the Mother Tongue.

2. At some later stage someone thought the words "agreeable, etc.," related to the "godly order," and dropped out the twenty-six intervening words, replacing them by dots, which disappeared in verbal quotation.

3. In the nineteenth century a careless quoter turned the words into an assertion that the Book "contained nothing but what was agreeable, etc." ; an inexcusable perversion. A variant of this misquotation attributes the (invented) words to the Book of 1552 instead of the Act. In one or other of these forms the misquotation has had a big run. It appears in various manuals and has been cited in the Church Assembly.

4. Mr. Sowersby goes further. He says, "The present Prayer Book explicitly declares that Edward's First Book doth not contain in it anything contrary to the Word of God or to sound Doctrine." As this has had a good start I have no doubt it is well on its way to form a new tradition.

5. It will be interesting to see what is the next phase of the legend. "Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!"

I am, etc.,

ALBERT MITCHELL

23 North Hill, Highgate

#### A PLEA FOR EX-SERVICE MEN

SIR,—The anniversary of the Empire's declaration of war against the powers of might and aggression evokes memories of sacrifice and suffering. Such memories, though, are of small avail if they do not awaken the national sense of responsibility towards those whose great services were given at the cost of even greater sacrifices, and on this solemn day I wish to remind the public of the urgent needs of many thousands of Ex-Service men whose nerves and mental stability gave way under the stress of war.

There are over 6,000 Ex-Service men to-day whose mental condition is such that they have been certified insane, and there is a great number more on the border-line. In spite of Government assistance, many of these men and their families are urgently in need of help, and the Ex-Services Welfare Society is the only unofficial organization undertaking the administration of assistance for such cases.

The Sir Frederick Milner Home at Eden Manor, Beckenham, Kent, is maintained by the Society as a rest and treatment centre, the patients living under ideal conditions for the recovery of that self-confidence which is essential to a permanent cure. At the Frederick Milner House, Leatherhead, recovered patients are trained in industries which afford full opportunities for their re-establishment as self-supporting members of the community.

Not least important among the many aspects of the Society's work is the help given to the families of mentally afflicted Ex-Service men. The generosity of the public towards the men who served with such devotion and at such terrible cost to themselves has found frequent expression since the Armistice, and this fact encourages me to ask for substantial support for the furtherance of the constructive work being performed by the Ex-Services Welfare Society.

Cheques should be sent to me at this address, and they will be most gratefully acknowledged.

I am, etc.,

FREDERICK MILNER

Ex-Services Welfare Society,

York Mansion,

94 Petty France, Westminster, S.W.1

## A PROTEST

SIR.—Among my Press cuttings I notice in the issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW for July 23 that a paragraph appears in reference to my new book, 'The Natural State,' which states that the work is "the production of an amateur writer." I object very strongly to this contemptuous inference, which is a deliberate misstatement of fact, calculated to create prejudice in the mind of prospective readers, and to do damage to the sales of my book.

I am a professional writer of many years' standing, and my income depends upon the royalties I receive from my books. In the past the SATURDAY REVIEW has referred to H. Dennis Bradley in a full-column eulogistic review as (verbatim quote) "a writer of great force and considerable literary ability."

On page 6 of 'The Natural State' you will see the announcement made that the first edition of this book consists of ten thousand copies. My agreement with my publishers, Messrs. T. Werner Laurie, Ltd., is that I am paid 15% royalties on the first 2,500 copies, and 20% on the next 7,500 and all subsequent 7s. 6d. editions, and the publisher has already paid me a very considerable sum on account of royalties before the book was published. The agreement is open to your inspection.

Of my previous works, 'The Eternal Masquerade' is in its sixty-eighth thousand, and all my other works have achieved sales well beyond five figures in the English publications. In addition, they have been translated into Spanish, German, Italian, and Dutch and also from the German into Portuguese.

In view of these facts, I regard the paragraph inserted in your paper as insulting, malicious and untrue.

I am, etc.,

H. DENNIS BRADLEY

Dorincourt, Kingston Vale, S.W.15

[We readily accept Mr. Bradley's statement that he is a professional writer with a large public.—ED. S.R.]

## MRS. HEMANS

SIR.—"Stet." in the latest of his interesting 'Back Numbers,' has omitted to mention Lord Jeffrey's essay on Felicia Hemans. This is one of the most remarkable of the *Edinburgh Review* Series (as published by Routledge) if only for the astonishing concluding sentence: "For we do not hesitate to say that she is, beyond all comparison, the most touching and accomplished writer of occasional verses that our literature has yet to boast of."

I am, etc.,

"DORIC"

Vine House, Grantham

## LITERARY COMPETITIONS—76

SET BY MARTIN ARMSTRONG

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best translation into practical prose description in the English style of Baedeker of the following passage from 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel.' The description must not exceed 200 words in length:

If thou wouldest view fair Melrose aright,  
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;  
For the gay beams of the lightsome day,  
Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.  
When the broken arches are black in night  
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;  
When the cold light's uncertain shower  
Streams on the ruined central tower;  
When buttress and buttress, alternately  
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;  
When silver edges the imagery  
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;

When distant Tweed is heard to rave,  
And the owl to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,  
Then go—but go alone the while—  
Then view St. David's ruined pile;  
And, home returning, soothly swear  
Was never a scene so sad and so fair!

B. Henry James, George Meredith, and John Synge share a flat. After a brief absence on a holiday, they return to find that both the kitchen-maid and the kitchen-table have disappeared. It is not clear whether the kitchen-maid has run away with the table or whether the table (since the kitchen-maid is known to have a morbid interest in table-turning) has run away with the kitchen-maid. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best fragment of a conversation, of not more than 400 words, in which the three masters discuss the problem, each speaking in his own peculiar style.

## RULES

i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week, LITERARY 76, or LITERARY 76a).

ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.

iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on their MSS.

iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of these rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the *first post* on Monday, August 22, 1927. The results will be announced in the issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW immediately following. Neither the Editor nor the setter of the Competitions can enter into any correspondence with competitors.

## RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 74

SET BY HUMBERT WOLFE

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a Completion, in 20 lines in all of rhymed verse, of a poem beginning with the following two lines:

Out of the years, as out of a basket,  
Where roses have been, and are no more...

B. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a review, in not more than 200 words, of the first volume of 'Poems and Ballads,' by Swinburne, written as though the book had just been published.

We have received the following report from Mr. Humbert Wolfe, with which we concur, and we have pleasure in awarding the prizes in accordance with his recommendations.

## REPORT FROM MR. WOLFE

74A. Both the substance and form of the two first lines invented by the setter of the competition caused grave difficulties to most of the large number of competitors. The substance, as being itself sentimental, suggested that vein to 80% of those who entered, and to at least as high a proportion the word "basket" offered either only "casket" or "ask it" as a rhyme, or presented such terrors that the rhyme was avoided, though the writer should be mentioned who pluckily rhymed it with "elastic."

Of those to be commended, Marion Peacock evoked One whose roses were all shrivelled:

Save one that is living  
In His Side,

and Mr. James Hall paid a well-merited tribute to "Stet." H. E. Smith had a pleasant thought about wasted honey, but wasted his own in two scrambling last lines. Edward Goodwill and M. A. Honest both contrived to write with sincerity. The competition is, however, redeemed by two poems. Gordon Daviot takes the second prize partly because he avoided rhyming "basket," and partly because he need not mind being second to so distinguished an effort as that of Icarus, to which the first prize is awarded.

#### THE WINNING POEM

Out of the years, as out of a basket,  
Where roses have been, and are no more,  
Glimmers a pale moth into a dusk yet  
Dark of the moon, forlorn of star:

The cypress trees in the garden change  
And counterchange with alien dreams,  
And the fountain waters are suddenly strange  
With forgotten music, and it seems

That heart-strings, long since snapped and silent,  
Sing, under some musician's hand,  
Of perilous gold a different sky lent  
Danæ, bound in a different land;

Of murmuring laurel, the cool tree shelter  
Where fugitive Daphne eluded Pan,  
And the silver feet of Thetis, which falter  
From Peleus the Myrmidon.

Ah peace, thin tunes in the night; for, lonely,  
Psyche the moth wings back to time,  
And the years are done, and these were only  
Ghosts of a rose in a wandering rhyme.

ICARUS

#### SECOND PRIZE

Out of the years, as out of a basket  
Where roses have been, and are no more,  
Drift the good things that I remember,  
Faint scents of garments Beauty wore.  
Friendly laughter in evening gardens,  
With grey smoke wreathing the daffodils;  
And sweet wild pipes that cried a summons  
One autumn night in the quiet hills.  
Hot tarry slips in northern harbours,  
Creak of cordage, wet decks in the sun;  
Whin on Ord, and mist on Lambourne;  
And the time we raced with the night and won.  
And there was the day we rode, all battered  
By boisterous winds and a sun too rude,  
From the pitiless downs and found a sudden  
Sanctuary in Sparsholt wood.  
Oh, precious things, so far, so many,  
So fragrant still, unbidden pour  
Out of the years, as out of a basket  
Where roses have been, and are no more.

GORDON DAVIOT

74B. The entries here were few and disappointing. Nearly all competitors reviewed 'Poems and Ballads' as though it had appeared in 1927, and the only review of it as a contemporary was not really satisfactory. In the circumstances the only reasonable solution is to divide one guinea between Ophelia and Doris Elles.

#### THE WINNING ENTRIES

Here is a book which must, at all costs, be kept out of the hands of our sons and, more especially, our daughters. It is not too much to say that every decent-minded man will be moved by Mr. Algernon Charles Swinburne's 'Poems and Ballads' (Moxon) with feelings akin to pity for its author, an Old Etonian, if report speaks truly, of some promise. Though much of his versifying smells rather of the lamp, it is admittedly not without merit; but in an age accustomed to plain speaking, Mr. Swinburne oversteps the bounds, accorded by the ever-

tolerant public, of common decency. In the name of delicacy, what can be said of this?

And all her face was honey to my mouth,  
And all her body pasture to mine eyes.

While most of our young poets try to imitate Mr. Tennyson, and fail, Mr. Swinburne has not even made the attempt; this is a thousand pities, for he might well learn the art of dealing discreetly with the emotion of love, the existence of which the present writer would be the last to deny.

The present work, with its descriptions of women immoderately beautiful, is offensive, and merits suppression.

OPHELIA

It is to be feared that Mr. Swinburne's first volume of 'Poems and Ballads' will not meet with as much attention as it deserves. His work has a powerful quality that places it at once above that of the mere versifier, but, alas! how hotly do these young men burn! What Mr. Swinburne does not know about "stinging veins" and "bloodlike blossoms" cannot be worth rhyming about. His poems are a series of feverish attacks which he vents upon us with a fine relish. But is this post-war generation to be excited by a singing of love-hated and the delights of "slow delicious bright soft blood"? If so, we shall doubtless hear more of Mr. Swinburne and his "little lovers that curse and cry." Frankly, however, we believe that the modern habit of careful scrutiny and easy rejection bodes ill for a work of this kind, though there is much in it that is well done. In the poet's own words, "there are worse things waiting for men than death," and assuredly there are worse things waiting for reviewers than this volume of poems. We can only hope that Mr. Swinburne's next effort will not be one of them.

DORIS ELLES

#### TWO POEMS

BY STELLA GIBBONS

#### MEMORY

O H clasp your sorrow close  
When sleepless creeps the night,  
And with the starlight mocks your eyes  
Where useless tears are bright!  
For time shall calm your grief,  
Making the strongest pain  
Into a sweet and sober thought,  
And peaceful days again.  
Until, remembering,  
Your heart shall say in pride  
And wonder: "That was I  
Who near from sorrow died."

As one who rests in fields  
Beneath the evening mild,  
And sees the mountains hung with cloud,  
And knows the storm blows wild  
In the icy citadel,  
Though in the fields below  
The trees hang thick with summer dust  
And home the goat-flocks go.  
He muses: "Once I, too,  
Climbed with the wind's wild bell,  
And on this time-soothed breast  
The eagle's shadow fell."

#### THE SENTRY

"WHO goes there?"  
Soft reply at the fast-barred entry  
"I," said Despair. "Is all well with your country?"  
"All's well, dark Emperor," said the sentry.

He thought: the enemy's cold host  
Has bared this land from coast to coast  
With mockery and savage frost.

Behind these walls there's not a stone  
Left upright, nor a vine that's blown  
With ripeness. I keep watch alone.

Stand from me! Better vale and crest  
Dying with frost, and woodlands pressed  
To stone than your soft, poisonous breast.

"Are you sure?" sighed the voice

"No breach—no entry?"

"All's well, dark Emperor," said the sentry.

## THE THEATRE

### HIGH EXPLOSIVE

BY IVOR BROWN

*The Father.* By August Strindberg. Everyman Theatre.  
*Over-ruled.* By George Bernard Shaw. Everyman Theatre.

DURING the principal phase of his career as a playwright Strindberg was a man of one emotion. He could hate, he did hate, he kicked and splashed and sang in his bath of hate. His particular object of hatred was woman and in 'The Father' he is at the top of his ferocious form. One emotion is quite enough for an artist if his aim is the writing of a lyric; but a lyric is not a life-work and hatred will not carry a man all the way, as Shakespeare, himself a grand master of misanthropy, intuitively understood. Strindberg mastered dramatic technique, and the feverishly fantastic story of 'The Father' is well laid out. But he does not strike me as a natural dramatist; rather he seems to me to be a lyricist of despair who took the wrong turning. The sign-post which led him astray was Ibsenism. He wanted to hit back; he wanted to bomb the Doll's House and blow the gallant Nora into smithereens. To write for the realistic stage had become the mode of active Scandinavians of the late nineteenth century just as to write for the poetic stage was inevitable for an Elizabethan with something to say and a living to earn. So Strindberg laid his train of high explosive at the parlour door.

Unfortunately Strindberg seized the weapon of the realists without possessing a realistic mind. Ibsen could combine a creed with a broad human view; he could pass with an easy mastery from Peer Gynt to Pastor Manders and from the kingdom of the trolls to the rural district council. His people may point a moral but they are not hewn out of all human semblance; they are not abstractions masquerading as aldermen or witches in wives' aprons. Nobody, surely, will insist that the she-devil in 'The Father' is "from the life": she is a poetic projection of all that Strindberg feared and hated in women, their persistence and their ruthlessness in quest of a domestic dominion, their superior obstinacy and their colossal lack of scruple. Mr. Milton Rosmer produced 'The Father' in the idiom of naturalism; he had to do so because it was thus written. But the thing is in essence at least as remote from actuality as 'King Lear' and, to do Strindberg justice, it does not fall far short of 'King Lear' in its concentration of fury and its abstract arraignment of the scheme of things.

Prose must stop to think: poetry need not and in many cases should not do anything of the kind. The poet drives at the absolute and does not dally among those relations in which the truth of prose is to be found. He sees a thing singly and towards its lonely prominence he directs the inner light of his sensibility. So Strindberg looked at woman, isolating not comparing, raging and not reflecting. He should never have used the vehicle of realistic play-writing, since that is the proper mode of comparison and reflection. Had he lived later he would have revelled in the stage-craft of the Expressionists, who do not argue and contend but scream and stab. His natural occupation was to compose a Dream of Unfair Women which would have plumbed the depths of deadly nightmare. But Laura in 'The Father' must stand by the familiar stove and present the household bills, in which position she is not a little ludicrous. Her proper surroundings are a witch's cauldron and a handful of magic recipes for the withering of mere males. She is altogether too big for any pedestrian boots from the shop next door; seven-leaguers alone will carry such a Fury of destruction.

Laura is the wife of a scientist and their fight is for the child. She has resolved to keep the child under

feminine and religious guidance; he sees his daughter as his immortality and is determined to make her his and to defeat the wife, the grandmother, and the old nurse who are plotting, bible in hand, to defeat him. Unfortunately he is a feeble creature, and in his pre-occupation with paternity he cannot stand up to his wife's cruel suggestion that the child is not his at all. Instead of calling the woman's bluff and saying "Very well, then, I will make her mine in spirit though she be another's in the flesh," he allows himself to be nagged and goaded into frenzy. Ineffective to the end, he cannot even be a murderous Othello; he only pitches the lamp at Laura and gives her the excuse she wants for having him certified insane. Last scene of all is a terrible spectacle of the scientist being wheedled into a strait-jacket by the old nurse and strapped to the sofa for Laura's triumphant contemplation.

The tragedy of Laura's husband is a tragedy of fiendishness at work on feebleness. One still finds mandarins observing that tragedy should concern itself with greatness; this nonsense has been current since Aristotle's time and the professorial mind appears never to have recovered from Aristotle's remark that "tragedy is an imitation of persons better than the ordinary man," which may have contained some value as a statement of current practice but is mere nonsense if taken as a precept. I did not discover at Hampstead that my available stores of pity and fear were diminished by the weakness and stupidity displayed by the scientist in handling his load of mischief. The weakling can exclaim with the strongest, "If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you poison us do we not die?" The tragedy is in the distress of any man and not in the tumbled might of greatness. The father may be a fool, but he bleeds and the potency of a play thus incarnadined is not to be resisted. There were no hesitations, no nervous cough of the lecturer, no sweet reasonableness about Strindberg; he put his heart into his work, blood, arteries, and all. Judged as realism, the play will not do. Laura is not a woman but a selection of feminine vices. But only a fool would judge 'The Father' by the canons of realism. Strindberg, in any case, does not give you time to start prosaic calculations. His frenzy catches the brain and whirls it like a leaf in the gale.

The play is preceded by Shaw's 'Over-ruled,' a wordy fragment which needs to be cut if it is to have its proper edge. But the curtain-raiser is chosen with an apt irony. Shaw's little sketch is a pleasantry about two married couples who are bored with bliss and have to behave like fools in order to shake off the intolerable burden of felicity. The point that happiness may be a habit and matrimony a wearisome tranquillity is, from the prosaic point of view, considerably more true than Strindberg's bellowings about the ruthless strife of sex. Thus the Shavian jesting is really a direct hint that the ensuing tragedy is not to be considered as a sociological treatise trimmed with logic but as a riot of over-emphasis amid which the poet's eye in anti-feminist frenzy rolls. Consider it so and 'The Father' is a kind of superb sonata played on the black notes only. Consider it in any other and you betray your capacity as a play-goer.

Mr. Robert Loraine worked heroically in a part not naturally his. I last saw Mr. Loraine as an excellent Petruchio; now the taurine woman-tamer had become a bundle of nerves beneath a she-devil's heel. At a time when so many leading players are content to repeat their own personalities and tricks of the trade, it is splendid to find an actor who is interested in acting and will turn eagerly from one humour to another even though the change incarcerates him in a strait-jacket on a sweltering August night. Gone were the gallant presence and the dash of Mr. Loraine the romantic; here was the spectral figure of Strindberg's tortured domesticity; here were the apprehensions of a weakling and the catastrophe of one who could have as well climbed the sky as tamed a shrew.

## BACK NUMBERS—XXXVI

A FEW days after Macaulay died in his arm-chair the SATURDAY REVIEW published a long, enthusiastic appreciation of the historian, the essayist, the man, evidently the work of one who knew him well personally. It is very improbable that anyone would now assign to Macaulay, in any of his capacities, quite such high rank as was there given him; but there has been a certain reaction against the tendency of superior persons to belittle him. He is for most of us to-day a figure rather different from the mid-Victorian idol, but however different his aspect, his stature is not very much diminished. We have not had such a multitude of vivid, picturesque, invariably readable writers of history as to undervalue his merits. And in one respect at least he is without rival.

\* \* \*

Persons who have attained to great height of brow may be very reluctant to admit it, but there are very few who can honestly deny that it was Macaulay who gave them in early youth the first impulse to inquire into certain departments of historical literature. Consider his dealings with two illustrious builders of the Indian Empire. To this day, what the average educated man or woman knows of Clive and Warren Hastings is what he or she read in Macaulay at the age of fourteen or fifteen. A somewhat similar claim might be made for the writer of those vigorous 'Lays of Ancient Rome.' They are not fine poetry; they are totally without subtlety or magic; the emotion they express is always that of the ordinary man. But, when everything disdainful about them has been said, the fact remains that, much more than any other volume in our literature, they have made the heroic figures of Rome real for schoolboys struggling wearily with her own historians. To have combined the effective popularization of one of Niebuhr's chief theories with the composition of spirited, telling ballads which appeal, at any rate for a while, to every boy is a decidedly remarkable achievement.

\* \* \*

That this Macaulay is rather rapidly outgrown by even the less critical of his young readers is true. A liking for the 'Lays' lasts about as long as a liking for the narrative poetry of Sir Walter Scott. The discovery even of Byron is dangerous to it; Shelley and Keats are quite deadly. But successive generations go through a period in which the ringing, obvious verse seems the most shoutable stuff in existence. Long after that period is ended some readers are forced to consider whether, after all, Macaulay was not in some sort a poet, if only at the moment when he wrote that wistful epitaph for a Jacobite. Its pathos is absolutely genuine, and for once there is modulation.

\* \* \*

The prose writer has a longer term of uncritical adoration. For one thing, it is very unusual for a boy or girl to be truly aware that there is such a thing as prose. As verse comes into existence among the most primitive peoples, who have no conception of prose, and has an immensely longer history than prose, so in the individual at all susceptible to literature the poets are appreciated, within the limits of a

child's capacity, long before Sir Thomas Browne and Landor and Pater. The young reader finds Macaulay admirably lucid, pointed, emphatic, full of interesting matter and presenting it with a lively feeling for every dramatic contrast. What more can be expected? It is only after many years that he or she comes to think that Macaulay's prose style is an instrument incapable of giving us the finer truth, the *vraie vérité*. How it may have been with others I can only guess, but what first upset me was his way of dealing with the inconsistencies of historical characters. He had a sharp eye for such inconsistencies, and evidently took pleasure in exploiting them. But though he exclaimed at the contrasts he detected, he seldom made any serious effort to explain them. His antithetical style needed just the opportunities that, let us say, James II offered. That a man should risk his soul for the sake of his mistress while risking his crown for the sake of his creed—that was perfectly to Macaulay's purpose. But when that antithetical style of his had been fully exercised, with brilliant effect, on such material, Macaulay was content. He was not concerned to see how far inconsistencies could be reconciled.

\* \* \*

Of rhythm he had but a poor sense. He balanced his prose by those devices which were in his age pretty generally used by writers of controversial prose, and there were times when, as in the very effective account of the proceedings against Warren Hastings, he recaptured, without servile imitation, something of the secret of Gibbon. But that prose can be subtle and undulant, that it can move to a hushed music as well as tramp to drum and fife, he seemed to have no idea. And he was tyrannized over by one letter, *k*. "Cinquering kongs their titles take" is not more disagreeable to the ear than dozens of paragraphs in Macaulay in which he seems to be trying to accumulate as many words containing *k* and the hard *c* as possible. Ernest Dowson used to say that the letter *v* was the most beautiful in the language, and that Poe's line, "The viol, the violet and the vine," was the sort of line every poet should try to write. That is as it may be; but a page which, when read out, sounds like a repetition of "konk" is an abomination. Clearly there was something the matter with Macaulay's ear; and even of his eye we may feel that it delighted too much in crude colours and ready-made picturesqueness. He liked glitter and pitch-black shadows, not the delicate gleams and finer shades.

\* \* \*

And for all that, and many prejudices, Macaulay remains. He may have declined in repute in this way or that, but he is still a very big writer, a massive and eloquent creature with a vast store of knowledge and extraordinary alertness. Recognition of his defects as a judge of historical characters and actions does curiously little to impair his fame. For the truth is his errors do very little harm to the reader. As the SATURDAY REVIEW acutely remarked in 1860, at the worst, he does but "give an intelligible form to errors, which would otherwise have assumed a confused one." He makes his errors easy to detect. He presents faulty estimates in forms against which it is easy to argue. And few writers have done half so much to stimulate inquiry and discussion among adolescents.

STET.

## MUSIC

## AUGUST GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

D VORAK'S Symphony in E minor ('From the New World') is the latest addition to the complete works issued by the Gramophone Company. It has been recorded by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, under Sir Landon Ronald, who always gives a good account of this kind of work. For the Symphony needs just the combination of swagger and of careful attention to detail which he knows how to obtain. The performance is excellent, except for one or two small points—the end of the last movement tails off rather like a speaker swallowing the words, of which he is not certain, at the end of a sentence instead of rounding his period with assurance and decision—while the recording is well up to standard. Another good orchestral record, also of an old favourite, is that of the 'Freischütz' Overture, conducted by Leo Blech with the Berlin Orchestra. Blech seems to be, if one may judge by his records, something more than a good *Kapellmeister* and he ought to be invited to conduct one of our London orchestras. He is certainly a good deal more lively, without being eccentric, than some of our recent guests from abroad.

For his first record Andres Segovia, the guitar-player, has chosen Bach's Gavotte in E flat from the Suite for lute, which is familiar in the violin version, and a set of Variations by Sor. This is an excellent choice, for the Gavotte shows the player's musical gifts, while the Variations display his virtuosity and the extraordinary range and variety of tone and colour he can get from his instrument. The reproduction is extremely good.

The vocal records issued by the company are less interesting. Göta Ljungberg contributes Franck's 'Panis Angelicus,' which does not rise above its accompaniment for violin, harp and organ. On the other side of this disc is the 'Ave Maria,' which Gounod superimposed in a misguided moment upon Bach's first prelude. Fleta has recorded 'Celeste Aida,' which he sings fairly well, though not with the complete absence of effort which made Caruso's performance of this exceedingly difficult air so exceptional. Fleta has not the robustness for the part of Rhadames, but many of his notes have a beautiful quality. His other air, from Donizetti's 'La Favorita,' shows him in a less favourable light, as a tenor to whom every high note is to be hung on to regardless of the demands of rhythm. The singing of Master Ernest Lough in Mendelssohn's 'Hear my Prayer' and 'O for the Wings of a Dove,' with the Temple Church Choir, provides a lesson for Fleta and for most other tenors and *prime donne*. Master Lough has a remarkable voice and knows how to use it. We may excuse, and indeed enjoy as a part of his youthfulness, a little over-emphasis in the pronunciation. But perhaps the most remarkable thing about this record is its extraordinary popularity. It is selling, so I am informed, like hot cakes. The vogue of Mendelssohn's sugary air, which is like watered Mozart of the 'Magic Flute' period, is evidently very much alive.

The Columbia list is brief and devoid of any seriousness. A record of the 'Blue Danube' and another of Strauss's Waltzes, made under the direction of Johann Strauss III, King of Waltz, is welcome, even though the recording is not first rate. Some records of turns by the 'Chauve Souris,' complete with the bland remarks of M. Balieff, are well done, and there are four songs by Maurice Chevalier, who is, however, better seen than merely heard.

H.

## REVIEWS

## BLAKE

BY EDWARD SHANKS

*Blake's Poetry and Prose.* Edited by Geoffrey Keynes. Nonsuch Press. 12s. 6d.  
*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.* By William Blake. Dent. 21s.

BLAKE was a man of nature so simple and so homogeneous that one can hardly dip into him anywhere without finding something characteristic. Let us begin with a letter dated January 14, 1804, and addressed to William Hayley:

DEAR SIR,—

I write immediately on my arrival, not merely to inform you that in a conversation with an old soldier, who came in the coach with me, I learnt that no one, not even the most expert horseman, ought ever to mount a trooper's horse. They are taught so many tricks, such as stopping short, falling down on their knees, running sideways, and in various and innumerable ways endeavouring to throw the rider, that it is a miracle if a stranger escape with his life. All this I learned with some alarm, and heard also what the soldier said confirmed by another person in the coach. I therefore, as it is my duty, beg and entreat you never to mount that wretched horse again, nor again trust to one who has been so educated. God, our Saviour, watch over you and preserve you.

Blake's biographers may know something about Hayley and his "wretched horse": I do not. This anguished paragraph comes, as it were, out of the blue. But it has all the charm of a fragment of conversation overheard—perhaps in the coach. And can one not, even to-day, overhear it? Blake, not himself much used to horses, has been distressed by the risks he has seen his "dear friend and benefactor" taking on a peculiarly dangerous specimen of the animal. He has argued in favour of caution and, when he sets off for London in the coach, fears that his arguments have not had enough weight. His mind is still full of the matter and he is not long in taking his fellow-passengers into his confidence. They obligingly supply him with fresh arguments, and for him "what the soldier said" is evidence good enough, especially when it is "confirmed by another person." He hastens to write to Hayley in a mixture of solicitude and triumph and earnest busybodiness. This is William Blake, designer and engraver, poet and mystic, author of 'Songs of Innocence' and 'Vola, or the Four Zoas.'

For Blake, like most, perhaps like all, true mystics, had an essentially matter-of-fact mind. His visions were to him real things, not figures of speech. He saw and held converse with angels and devils, his prophetic books were dictated to him by supernatural powers. These things really happened: they were on the same plane of experience as the horse and the soldier. Blake the anxious traveller and Blake the prophet were the same man concerned about different things, each appropriate to its time.

One result of this is, I think, to be seen in his sturdy cheerfulness. There was no self-deception about him, as there often is about those who hover on the borders of mysticism, because no self-deception was required. Gautier said of himself that he was "one for whom the visible world exists," and that certitude constituted his happiness. Blake was a man for whom both the visible and the invisible worlds existed in precisely the same manner: he lived in, and enjoyed, them both, and there was in him no struggle to or from either. Both were to him natural and necessary parts of life and therefore he had much less than what we are accustomed to consider the poet's usual discontent with the actual world. He had one brush with it, no less painful for being rather ridiculous, this time with another soldier whom he pushed out of his garden and who, in return, accused him of using seditious language. On this episode he writes:

O, why was I born with a different face?  
Why was I not born like the rest of my race?  
When I look, each one starts! When I speak, I offend;  
Then I'm silent and passive and lose every Friend.

This is a poignant expression of what many other poets have tried to express, the sense of loneliness in a strange world, but it stands almost alone in Blake. He was aware, indeed, that he was unjustly neglected and rated below his proper worth, if he were rated at all, but he recognized the fact with cheerful fortitude. He is the least melancholy of poets—a queer, cranky old fellow, he seems, but always full of life and interest and always good-humoured.

Neglected he was to an astonishing degree, not merely during his life but long after it. When his juniors, Keats and Shelley, were already enthroned, Palgrave does not seem to have heard of him. Indeed, one might almost say that only within the memory of men still young has he been properly recognized. Some of this was due to his highly individual method of publishing his works, a good deal to the nature of the works themselves. Even if we leave out of consideration the advancement of his thought, which even now we have not fully assimilated and which still seems like that of a pioneer pushing on ahead of us, and the extraordinary difficulty of his symbolic system, there remain elementary obstacles behind. The naïve technical roughness of the 'Songs of Innocence' was as far from the manner of Shelley or the manner of Wordsworth as from that of the eighteenth century. The technical obstacles in the way of appreciation are now overcome, and we may not unreasonably hope that one by one the profundities of his thought may be made plain to us. But unless Blake's teaching becomes a religion which all of us must learn to understand as he wrote it, it is doubtful whether those profundities will ever be widely appreciated directly from his works. They are more likely to pass into the general body of thought by way of the interpretations of a few devoted persons. For Los and Enitharmon and Urizen, though they may yield their secrets to long and patient inquiry, are not for every man or for many men. Life is too short for all of us to puzzle out their meanings: experts must do that and give us the results. It is improbable that Blake would have complained of such a view. His work has written all over it a good-tempered: "There it is—I have done my best, and you must take it or leave it." He got little out of life, but he asked little and he was content with what he got. It is not likely that he would be dissatisfied with his posthumous fame.

A word or two must be said on the two remarkable volumes which have furnished the occasion for these remarks. The Nonsuch edition of Blake is an astonishing feat of book-production. It contains in one volume of 1,152 pages every scrap that Blake wrote, including his marginal comments on Reynolds, Berkeley and other writers, and a number of his designs. The paper is, perhaps, too thin for comfortable reading, but the volume gives the reader more at a low price than any I have seen for a considerable time.

This edition of the 'Marriage of Heaven and Hell' gives a full-colour facsimile of the copy in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. The reproduction is beyond praise, though I fancy none but students will take a thoroughgoing delight in a facsimile of coloured etchings printed on surfaced paper.

## IN DEFENCE OF SAVAGERY

*The Clash of Cultures and the Contact of Races.*  
By G. H. Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers. Routledge.  
18s.

THE title of this important book is perhaps not very happily chosen, for it is better described as a study of the ineptitude of the European, be he admin-

istrator, missionary or stay-at-home philanthropist, who thinks that native races must necessarily be in every way happier and better for the blessings of civilization, which include laws contrived for totally different circumstances and a code of morals which is not only not demonstrably productive of biologically superior results but is also far from being of universal acceptance even in Europe. It is a work which should be in the hands of all who come in contact with non-European races, and might well be prescribed as an examination subject for all civil servants whose activities bring them in contact with what is called the native problem.

Most people are familiar with the fact that a plant or animal removed to a new environment may prove an unmixed evil, like the rabbit in Australia; but not everyone realizes that the introduction of European ideas into an alien setting means the wholesale disintegration of the old culture, and does irretrievable harm to native races. The author does not conceal his detestation of the "benevolence" which has destroyed tribal life, beliefs, hopes and morality, which has freed the native from his old fears only to create new ones, and which has left him wholly incapable of controlling his own destiny. He is equally severe upon the official remedies for the decline of subject races, which are, in his opinion, "directed exclusively towards increasing the effective influence and interference of European officials."

Perhaps it may be well to say a word of warning to prospective readers; they must not expect to find any ideas treated as sacrosanct because they form a part of the morality, real or professed, of the white races or some of them; the author has no fault to find with child marriage, head-hunting, magic and sorcery, freedom in sexual matters and the like. He insists, time and again, that though the expert is not called upon to frame policies for the administrator, it is his duty to discover, if possible, the consequences of the administrator's policy. But it is one thing to point things out and quite another to make the listener appreciate the point, as the author himself realizes.

There are a good many different threads of argument in the book, economic, biological, psychological and sociological, which are not in all cases very closely related to the main purpose of the author. This is particularly the case with the chapters on psychological factors, the discussion on Puritanical and Hellenistic culture trends being really a dissertation on the difference between the Reformation and the Renaissance; but the moral is drawn when the teaching of missionaries, and more especially of native converts, with regard to amusements is held up as an awful example.

The statistical part of the work is perhaps the weakest. In dealing with the sex ratio at birth the author quotes figures based on seven million births in all parts of Europe to show that 1,057 boys are born to 1,000 girls; on the next page he alludes to an excess of stillborn males; but what has this to do with the sex ratio at birth? The mortality does not affect the sex ratio if the stillborn are included; if they are not included the male preponderance tends to be decreased. But the author goes on: "Another circumstance which would tend to augment the slight excess of male births," as though the greater mortality of boys increased the surplus of males.

The circumstance to which he alludes is the slightly greater probability that the first born will be a male, with a smaller preponderance in the case of the second child; this seems to work out at a proportion of males to females of sixty-four to sixty-one or thereabouts; and this is almost the proportion arrived at on the basis of the seven million births. Is there any other factor over and above this preponderance in early births? In a footnote it is laid down that differential foetal mortality and a high primary sex ratio determine the birth sex ratio; what is the meaning of "high"

in this connexion? Surely conception ratio minus antenatal mortality gives the birth ratio. The whole question of birth ratio is complicated by the variation in the size of families; for it is clear that the ratio will not be the same for two populations if one has a large proportion of large families, but a small number of marriages, and the other a larger number of marriages but a smaller number of children per marriage.

Taking it all in all, Captain Pitt-Rivers, by pleading their cause, has done a service to our subject races, which cannot easily be over-estimated. There is still hope for the "savage" if his rulers will open their ears.

### A WOMAN IN THIBET

*My Journey to Lhasa.* By Alexandra David-Neel. Heinemann. 21s.

LHASA is still counted as a "forbidden city." It is true that there is now a British mission there, that khaki-clad native soldiers parade its streets, armed with rifles and field-guns bought from India, and that an occasional English explorer, supported by passports and official introductions, may even be admitted within its gates. But these are, at any rate, *men*. Until Madame David-Neel's adventurous journey, the government of the Dalai-Lama could at least claim that their somewhat dilapidated sanctuary had been preserved inviolate against women foreigners. They had yet to learn that nothing is "forbidden" nowadays to the women of Europe.

It would even seem that the British authorities on the Indian frontier had also to learn this elementary lesson. At any rate, when Madame David-Neel applied for permission for herself and her adopted son—a young Lama of the Red Sect, named Yongden—to cross the frontier *en route* for Lhasa, she was promptly refused. This annoyed her so much that she unhesitatingly attributes every difficulty she encountered at this stage to the evil influence of perfidious Albion. She can hardly blame us for the fact that she had to travel at night, in disguise, with revolvers hidden under her clothing; but in some vague way she seems to think that even this was all our fault. She claims for every traveller "the right to walk as he chooses, all over the globe which is his." Unfortunately local prejudice against foreign trespassers is strong—especially in "forbidden cities"—and, as a matter of fact, any intelligent Thibetan could put up a very good case for keeping European visitors out. But it is a simple fact, which ought to have been obvious even to this whimsical lady, that the objections to her presence in Thibet emanated from the Thibetans themselves, and from no one else. The British Government has no more interest in keeping her out of Lhasa than the Dalai-Lama has in keeping her out of London.

However, she got there. They travelled disguised as humble pilgrims, begging their way. They had money with them, but seldom ventured to show it for fear of robbers. Yongden, as a practising Lama, was in great demand for his "magic" in nearly every village they passed: he would tell the people where to look for a lost cow, or prophesy the recovery of a sick man, and these guesses were remarkably successful—to the secret amusement of himself and his "mother." In return they would be entertained for the night, and fed, perhaps, upon Thibetan tea, with butter and salt in it, or upon that even less attractive local delicacy, the rotting stomach of a cow. "Thibetan cooking," declares Madame David-Neel, who will hear of nothing against the country or its people, "is not to be despised." Perhaps not, in her situation. But to compare the native cheese with Roquefort! The general result was that she travelled more economically than she ever had in her life before, and that she got to Lhasa and back without her nationality being suspected. It was an

extraordinary achievement, and it is impossible to withhold our admiration for this plucky and resourceful woman. Most women would have died under the strain and dirt and misery of it all.

They could never change their clothes, and hardly ever wash. Madame David-Neel had dyed her head with Indian ink and added yak's hairs for a pig-tail. Her face she pigmented daily from greasy, blackened sides of an old kettle. Even when she hurt herself in a fall, and fainted with pain, Yongden was afraid to throw water on her face lest the passers-by should notice her white skin. In the houses Yongden, as a Lama, would be given a mat, but his "mother" had to recline on the filthy floor. But she never dreamt of turning back. On the contrary, "I deem it to be the most blessed existence one can dream of, and I consider as the happiest in my life those days when, with a load upon my back, I wandered as one of the countless tribe of Thibetan beggar pilgrims." She is "one of the Ganghis Khan race who, by mistake or perhaps for her sins, was born in the Occident"—or so a Lama once told her. In courage and perseverance she certainly equals any of them.

Travelling in such a fashion, Madame David-Neel's opportunities of observation were naturally much restricted. She could do no map-making (that great traveller, Pereira, by the way, had lent some maps for her guidance) and though she says she sometimes found existing maps at fault, she gives us no substitute here—not even a sketch-map of her route. But she got to know the people, their habits and ways of thought, as no other traveller could. She mentions long conversations in native houses on theological or political questions; and she tells one truly astonishing story which, more than anything else in the book, illustrates her affinity with these people. The two travellers were in a lonely place, without fire to cook their food over, or means of getting it, for their tinder box was wet. Years before Madame David-Neel had been initiated, by Thibetan Lamas, in the *thumo reskiang* practice—which is nothing less than the art of "increasing the internal heat." She now sat down and went carefully through the ritual:

Soon I saw flames arising around me; they enveloped me, curling their tongues above my head. I felt deliciously comfortable. . . . A loud report awakened me. The ice on the river was rending. The flames suddenly died down as if entering the ground. I opened my eyes. The wind was blowing hard and my body burned. I made haste. The flint and steel and moss would work this time; I was convinced of it. I was still half dreaming, although I had got up and walked toward the tent. I felt fire bursting out of my head, of my fingers. . . .

She lit her fire. The passage well illustrates an aspect of this most remarkable book, which has an interest of its own, quite apart from the travel and adventure which are its leading feature. It plainly suggests a separate publication, which, no doubt, is what the author intends to give us some day.

### MAN AS HE IS

*Sex and Repression in Savage Society.* By Bronislaw Malinowski. Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS is a household word which, like many other such terms, bears for the majority of mankind no very strictly defined meaning; but it has the reputation of implying a discussion without reticence of matters of sex and other human frailties. Psycho-analysis originated as a clinical method for the study of neuroses and then in the hands of Freud, its most famous exponent, enlarged its bounds and became the basis of an all-embracing scheme which professes to explain most phenomena of body and mind, and many familiar features of human society, such as taboo and totemism.

Among the fundamental doctrines of the psycho-analytic school is that of the *Oedipus complex*, so called from the Greek tragedy in which the hero was wedded, unwittingly, to his own mother; in adopting the term the psycho-analyst has changed its meaning and uses it to express the attitude, mainly unconscious, of male offspring towards their parents, not only in our own type of family but also in all the manifold forms found throughout the world.

As long as Freud was concerned only with neuroses mankind at large was but little concerned with his doctrines; but when he gave a general account of psychological processes on the same lines he issued a challenge, not only to psychologists, who are competent to sit in judgment on his theories, but also to everyone interested in the history of man, including the anthropologist. Dr. Malinowski was at the outset deeply impressed by what he now terms a popular craze; but, as his studies progressed, and he was able to test Freudian theories in the light of his own knowledge of a wholly different type of society in the Trobriand Islands, his initial enthusiasm faded away and he became a stern critic of the doctrines which had previously made so strong an appeal to him. In the present volume he gives some of the reasons which lead him to dissent from the Freudian theory of the origin of totemism, and also shows that among the Trobriand Islanders the *Oedipus complex* is replaced by a wholly different type, in which the sister and mother's brother take the place of the mother and father of the orthodox theory. Perhaps, with this result before them, psycho-analysts will moderate their ardour and condescend to make an unbiased examination of the facts on the spot before they propound theories to explain them.

Dr. Malinowski's interest is not, however, purely destructive; he devotes a hundred pages to the question of how human culture arose from the instinctive behaviour of pre-human beings. In dealing with a no-man's-land of this kind many assumptions have to be made, and it is not surprising that some of them are debatable. The author insists, for example, that material culture implies knowledge, and that knowledge is impossible without language. But surely it is permissible to conceive of the existence of a stone-using animal in, let us say, Oligocene times without supposing that language had already been developed. There is nothing to prevent a deaf mute from acquiring technical skill by simple imitation of others, and anyone who had seen a tame chimpanzee, or even a baboon, knows how teachable they are. In the sixteenth century chimpanzees were trained in Sierra Leone to fetch water from the river; they only needed supervision when they reached home, for they could not learn to take the waterpots from their heads. In our own days baboons sell tobacco in the markets of Togoland and pursue round the market anyone who fails to drop into the bag the requisite number of cowries. If our pre-human ancestors could learn to make stone implements they could hand on the method without the use of words.

At another point of his argument the author appears to assume that custom in the lower stages of culture is more uniform than it really is; he speaks, for example, of the prohibition of adultery as second only in importance to the law of exogamy. This is no doubt true of many peoples, but there are others for whom paternity is a matter of almost complete indifference; the ownership of the child is everything. Among the Ibo tribes west of the Niger, a bride leaves her husband a few days after marriage and returns to her father's house to live a life of free love until she conceives; her husband may be numbered among her lovers, but if she accords him special favour native custom requires that she shall at once return to his house and live a chaste life. The same area will prove to Dr. Malinowski that his dictum as to the difficulty of divorce is by no means universally true; a wife

who leaves her husband and runs to another man changes husbands by the simple process of the refund of the bride-price, just as in the first instance payment of the price made her and her children the property of her husband. It seems doubtful whether we can, in such cases, speak of a ceremonial sanction of marriage which Dr. Malinowski regards as an essential feature of the tie.

This work is a most important contribution to anthropology and psychology, and it will be long before our text-books are brought up to the standard which is henceforth indispensable. In future no account of marriage customs will be complete which does not give an account of the psychological complex associated with the type of family under discussion. Where descent is reckoned through females, and authority resides largely with the mother's brother, the society and the associated complex are of a type wholly different from our own. How many types exist we cannot guess; but it seems probable that the patriarchal polygynous complex will differ considerably from both our own and the matrilineal type.

If man were a reasonable being we might, perhaps, hope that social reformers would think it worth their while to consider what type of family is best suited to a given type of development, and apply their conclusions not only to the so-called lower races, but also to ourselves. But social revolutions based on knowledge and sane judgment seem to be little less remote than the end of the world.

## THE DRESS OF OUR ANCESTORS

*Costume and Fashion. Vol. II.* By Herbert Norris. Dent. 31s. 6d.

IN his second volume on 'Costume and Fashion,' Mr. Herbert Norris deals minutely with the evolution of dress manners and customs during the years between Senlac and Bosworth. The book is fascinating in its detail and is particularly clearly and well arranged, being somewhat on the lines of an American magazine, so that each aspect of the subject, i.e., tapestry, sculpture, materials, jewellery, entertainment, etc., is linked up through the different reigns like a serial. In this way one may choose one's particular interest and follow the vicissitudes of the weaving industry, the various conceits in hairdressing, or the development of architecture in England from 1066 to 1485. The method, too, of beginning each chapter with a preface of contemporary historical events is useful, for it provides a helpful and welcome means of refreshing one's memory with long-forgotten dates. For the theatrical producer of historical plays the book should be invaluable; in addition to the detailed descriptions of the various fashions there are innumerable illustrations showing not only the shape, decoration and manner of wearing each costume, but simple and practical diagrams for the cutting-out and making of them.

The chapter on Heraldry (written in collaboration with G. Ambrose Lee, Clarenceux King-of-Arms), which the authors define as "the science of recording genealogies and interpreting changes and devices on shields, banners, etc.," is particularly comprehensive. In this the science of heraldry and the influence of armorial device are traced from the times when they were used exclusively for war-like symbols to the days when they become a part of the general decoration, and their influence is seen on tapestry, furniture, and women's fashions. Practical hints are given for the guidance of those who wish to include armorial bearings into banners, hangings and garments for stage purposes, and many illustrations are shown of the various emblems, "subordinaries," "tinctures," etc. Head-dresses, footwear, the different texture and types

of materials, and jewellery are all dealt with in equal detail, while some paragraphs on table manners and the use of eating implements are amusing and enlightening. The direction for giving a bath or "stew" to a gentleman of the fifteenth century is particularly nice and shows a splendid disregard for economy in sponges:

If your lord will to the bath his body to wasche clene  
Hang sheets round about the roof; do thus as I mean.  
Every sheet full of flowers and herbs sweet and green,  
And look ye have sponges five or six thereon to sit or lean.  
Look there be a great sponge thereon your lord to sit,  
Thereon a sheet as so he may bathe him there afit.  
Under his feet also a sponge if there be any to put,  
And always be sure of the door and see that he be shut.  
A basin full in your hand of herbs hot and fresh,  
And with a soft sponge in hand his body that ye wasche,  
Rince him with rose water warm and fair upon him sprinkle.

But how often, one wonders, did his lordship go to the bath? Was this a prescription for medieval Saturday nights or were the intervals longer? Perhaps Mr. Norris will some day give us a History of the Bath from Eden to Armageddon. In the meantime we know all about the tailoring from Senlac to Bosworth.

## TWO REFEREES

*Recollections of a Boxing Referee.* By Joe Palmer. The Bodley Head. 10s. 6d.  
*Gloves and the Man.* By Eugene Corri. Hutchinson. 18s.

"LITERARY critics will bear with my imperfections," says Mr. Corri in his concluding paragraph; and indeed one should not look to the memoirs of a boxing referee for fine writing; but one does look for racy writing, for a certain suitable rough and tumble of language, for prose with a punch, so to speak. Alas, that the politeness which has invaded the Ring has invaded its referees also. Both these books are full of the clichés of current journalism and have very little of the colour which has made Pierce Egan a classic. Of the two, Mr. Palmer's is the better reading. As Mr. Bohun Lynch points out in his introduction, there are many "human touches." Mr. Palmer tells excellently, for example, the story of his refereeing a scrap in a Welsh mining village, when the fight was held in a barn, lit by naphtha flares, which threatened to go out and put Mr. Palmer in fear for the stakes that bulged his pockets. There is about that story a smack of the days when there were English world champions in every weight, and boxing was not "big business."

Mr. Corri has made the mistake of trying to say too much. His memory is naturally very crowded, and, instead of selecting, he has poured out a stream of disordered and disjointed little facts, with some good stories, interesting sidelights, shrewd opinions all muddled up together. Mr. Palmer has chosen fewer events to narrate and has narrated them more fully, so that one enters better into the characters concerned. Moreover, Mr. Palmer has allowed himself a more natural style of writing; he has not the old slang of Regency and nineteenth-century writers, but here and there a breath of modern pugilism has been allowed to creep in and enliven the rest. Unprofessional writers should realize that their only chance of success is to write as they talk, and then, if they talk well, their writing will at least be lively; unluckily they are usually terrified by the pen into banal prosiness and stilted sententiousness.

These criticisms aside, both books are bound to interest the specialist reader. The names of their authors are sufficient guarantee that the books are authoritative, and although they are not exactly records (we have detected certain minor errors), they present an excellent picture in broad lines of the boxers and boxing world of some forty years. Both books are illustrated with photographs.

## NEW FICTION

BY L. P. HARTLEY

*Tinker's Leave.* By Maurice Baring. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.  
*The Spanish Lady.* By Margaret L. Woods. Cape. 7s. 6d.  
*I'll Have a Fine Funeral.* By Pierre la Mazière. Brentano's. 7s. 6d.  
*Kitty Leslie at the Sea.* By C. A. Dawson-Scott. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

TINKER'S leave is not what I imagined it to be, a form of French leave, but leave to live, leave to lead one's own life:

If tinkers may have leave to live,

And bear the sow-skin budget . . .

Such was the leave that Miles Consterdine claimed and took, thereby astonishing his aunt Fanny, who until his twenty-seventh year had kept him in leading-strings. As a boy he had had a hum-drug life, always under the direction of his energetic and dominating aunt; as the senior partner of Consterdine and Co., wine merchants, he looked like attaining a placid and uneventful old age. Then, without asking anyone's permission, he suddenly took a holiday in Paris. This act of self-assertion, this declaration of personal independence, left him bewildered and at a loss. He had won his freedom but could not turn it to account, his nature was so poor in wishes. It was chance that, by making him accidentally souse an old Russian gentleman with soda-water, showed him in what direction his desires lay, chance that sent him as press-photographer to the theatre of the Russo-Japanese war.

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What follows is mainly concerned with Miles's adventures in Russia and on the Russo-Chinese frontier. 'Tinker's Leave' is a novel almost in the picaresque manner; Miles does not direct events, he waits upon them. This subservience, indeed, is part of his character: he had little initiative of his own; even when he falls in love he lets events take their course instead of bending them to his will. He is receptive, charming, interested, simple: a little colourless, like many of Mr. Baring's heroes. This is in one sense all to the good, for in his consciousness are reflected, as in a tranquil and truthful mirror, the multifold moods, passions and idiosyncrasies of those he meets—and he meets a lot of queer people. That air of veraciousness which Mr. Baring achieves so effortlessly stands him in good stead when, as here, he is concerned with the rich and strange. We believe everything he tells us. Equally valuable here, too, are the waywardness of his fancy and the discursiveness of his mind; for the incidents of warfare follow no plan and the vagaries of the Russian temperament are incapable of being seen steadily and whole. Mr. Baring's slightly inconsequent method admirably suits his subject-matter. In the light of 'Tinker's Leave' it is easy to see how in some of his English novels he Russianizes the English scene, and sees his characters through Russian eyes. Englishmen tend to be ironical and purposeful and censorious; they rarely say exactly what they mean; what they are doing at the moment is usually only part of a larger scheme; when they speak of themselves or others it is usually in a mood of criticism or self-justification. To find them simply stating an opinion or declaring an intention is rare; still rarer is it to find them without an intention. But readers of 'C' and 'Cat's Cradle' will remember that the characters in those books relinquish themselves with scarcely a struggle to the stream of Fate. They are without that acute sense of personal responsibility which most Englishmen possess. They are neither feckless nor will-less, but they are resigned. Miles Consterdine recalls them; he differs from the Russians among whom Fate has thrown him not in kind but in degree. He understands them at once. Hence 'Tinker's Leave' shows us the Russians from inside; the high lights fall on points of resemblance, not on points of difference. It is a very entertaining account, marked by a power of observation that is never strained and never consciously subtle, though full of distinctions and fine shades. Some, no doubt, will find the construction of the narrative, especially in the concluding passages, too lax to hold their interest. It certainly goes with a very happy-go-lucky gait. But the style and manner are admirably adapted to the writer's purpose. By no other method could he include, so naturally, so wide a diversity of incident. A firmer treatment would unduly constrain those gossamer moods and aëry indications of character, crushing them out of shape. 'Tinker's Leave' may be first and foremost a travel-book; but it is one of the rare travel-books that rest, refresh and stimulate the imagination.

Mrs. Woods leaves much less to chance than does Mr. Baring. He lets the Far East speak for itself and is chary of interpreting it: Mrs. Woods conducts us to the Spain of the Peninsular War, and keeps tight hold of us. What authority she has besides Napier's for saying that in 1813 the Duke of Wellington (or Lord Wellington, as he then was) fell a victim to the charms of a lady living in Cadiz, I do not know: but clearly the incident needed all the support and elaboration she could give it. She does succeed in making the affair most circumstantial, and also in making it the pivot of a neat and exciting plot. But lest if left alone we should see what we are not meant to see, she holds us closely by the hand: her references to history, her local colour, the distribution of her crowds, times of day, relationships between the Spanish nobility—all are carefully studied and mar-

shalled into their places. The characters also speak carefully and well, sometimes in the jargon of historical novels, sometimes with their own voices, but always without wasting a word. Ismena, the beautiful Countess whom Wellington loves, the cat's paw of her family and the creature of her own desires, is not very credible. We are made to feel her beauty, but the effect of her personality dwindles as the story proceeds, scorched and withered by the blaze of melodrama in which it becomes involved. There is plenty of action: a French spy with exquisite manners, a Spanish cardinal, cruel-subtle, ambushes, pistols, threats of a watery death. These scenes Mrs. Woods handles with distinction but without conveying the sense of rapidity and urgency. She does not vary the tempo. She writes with almost too much restraint: Ensign Beaumont, for instance, is faced by a horrible death, but with the exception of one outburst (very well described) he behaves as though at the worst he only expected a tooth out. Wellington himself just fails, I think, to come alive. His words and actions express his character admirably; his determination not to let love interfere with duty nor even, if possible, with discipline and routine, is described with great nicety. As far as its inhumanity goes we can find no fault with his character. It is less easy to believe in him as the lover of Doña Ismena; in the love-scenes his machinery creaks. But taken as a whole, 'The Spanish Lady' provides a very pleasant excursion into the past.

'I'll Have a Fine Funeral' is, like many French novels, an exercise on a theme. If you are poor and honest and enter life as it were through the "wrong door" you will remain a helot and your death will be unattended by expressions of national joy. You will wear yourself out, with no reward but a few hundreds of francs and the enjoyment of "the complete confidence of your employers." Realizing this M. la Mazière's hero, returned to the bank after a very disagreeable period of military service, appropriates to his own use a large sum of money. With this he speculates and, as so often happens in novels, soon accumulates a considerable capital. In the course of a cynical interview with the President of the Bank he restores the money and is presently elected a Senator of the Republic. The passages that describe the early days of the war are particularly vivid and there are character sketches of great power. M. la Mazière undoubtedly knows what he is about, but his moral is dubious: neither speculators nor criminals always make fortunes.

The vicissitudes of the 'Leslie Arms,' that over-crowded sea-side cottage, provide considerable entertainment. It is all a question of housing accommodation. Many farces have been written on this theme. Mrs. Dawson-Scott's comedy never degenerates into farce; Kitty Leslie is too good a housekeeper and ultimately too good a wife.

## OTHER NOVELS

*Flying Clues.* By Charles J. Dutton. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

Dr. Jackson was a wealthy practitioner. It was therefore not surprising that he should give an expensive dinner to a group of friends. The surprise came when a woman was murdered in the doctor's house during the dinner. It is true that Jackson was out of the room at the time, but his voice could be clearly heard speaking at the telephone. Who, then, was the culprit? And what was the motive? These are the problems with which Mr. Dutton confronts his readers, and it is exceedingly likely that he will leave many of them guessing until the end of the narrative. It will be sufficient for us to say that the identity of the guilty person is eventually established, and that he

meets with his death in a remarkable manner. There is a good deal about "dope" traffic, and the story is diversified by the intrusion of an element of Oriental mysticism.

*Seed Pods.* By Mrs. Henry Dudeney. Collins. 7s. 6d.

Mrs. Dudeney's story is built up round a girl—a foundling who runs away from a convent, joins a theatrical touring company playing in 'Seed Pods,' and, when it breaks up and she is stranded, marries a rich brewer in a Sussex town, its mayor. The way in which Lisette's character is brought out as the story runs its course from her first adventure in life and love at the age of sixteen to her final settling down in the peace and security of family life, is quietly skilful—it is a good and convincing piece of character-drawing. The men of the story are not so immediately convincing, but we can heartily recommend it to any reader of fiction who is not deterred by split infinitives.

*The Friend of Antaeus.* By Gerard Hopkins. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Gerard Hopkins makes one of his characters refer to the "spiritual godmothers of Henry James." Mr. Hopkins might himself be not unfairly described as the spiritual god-child of Henry James. His theme is his own, but his method of treatment recalls very vividly the author of 'The Golden Bowl,' and there are certain passages which have the authentic Jacobean flavour. Glenner Passingham is a detached observer of life, who is ultimately forced by pressure of circumstances into the position of an actor in the drama of which he intended to be merely a participant. That drama is concerned mainly with the conflict that arises between a man's love for his wife and his passion for his mistress. It is a sorry chronicle and, though the man himself remains in the background throughout, he compels our sympathy and our pity. Even more pathetic is the unhappy Evadne Lucas, who, with all the instincts and longings of a wife, is fated to remain a courtesan. The story is well told, and over it all there hangs a sense of the sad futility of man's aims and endeavours.

*The Man Who Knew.* By F. A. M. Webster. Selwyn and Blount. 7s. 6d.

*Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt.* This would be a quite good tale if the reader were not haunted by reminiscences at every turn of the narrative. The capable hero from South Africa, the big game hunter who has learnt the true art of disguise—of thinking oneself into the part, the fateful date for the discovery of a great conspiracy, the little book with all its details written in cipher, the German firm where you get behind all the outer defences to find a little old Jew at the centre, the negro who is organizing the coloured races, and, to change the venue a little, the veiled figure which brings the plague, are all old friends. Those who have not made their acquaintance, if such there are, will find this a rattling story of adventure, marred by a totally unnecessary piece of anti-Semitism on the last page.

## SHORTER NOTICES

*Robespierre: A Study.* By Hilaire Belloc. Nisbet. 12s. 6d.

MR. BELLOC'S masterly study was first published in 1901, and has, therefore, waited more than a quarter of a century for its second edition. It is hard to believe that it can wait so long for a third. We have been accustomed to think of it as a lesser work than 'Danton,' or even 'Marie Antoinette'; but reading it now again it seems the most interesting of the three. Dealing with a most elusive personality, Robespierre, the pedant, the man of principle, who yet abandoned both himself and his friends; the incarnation of the

Terror—so looked upon and so looking upon himself—yet now known to have used all his energy to save many lives, and to have lost his own because he was too moderate—it handles a problem worthy of Mr. Belloc's skill, his vast knowledge of this subject, and his unequalled power of bringing the past to life again. History, said Michelet in a phrase quoted here, must be "a resurrection." It is, when Mr. Belloc writes it. "Readable history," he says himself, in his introduction to this new edition, "is melodrama"; and of the French Revolution, at all events, that is certainly true. The note of tragic melodrama rings through these pages, culminating in the magnificent rhetoric of the final passage. Mr. Belloc has altered nothing (very rightly) and withdraws nothing; but when he wrote this book he believed in "representative institutions," whereas now—well, now he holds somewhat other views.

*Public School Verse: An Anthology.* Volume VI. 1925-1926. Heinemann. 3s. 6d.

THE sixth selection of public school verse is fully up to the level of its predecessors, and if it affords no indications of the presence in our English public schools of a host of "mute, inglorious Miltons," it at least suggests that a number of promising recruits will shortly be available to swell the rapidly growing army of our professional poets. Arthur H. Evans, of Bedford Modern School, opens the volume with an excellent poem entitled 'Evensong.' A maturer note than one might reasonably expect from a schoolboy is struck in the concluding stanza :

The dusk has conjured forth a star  
That glimmers through the sky and stares  
Upon the cold, damp earth. My prayers  
Have risen to it; and they are  
That I may do one glorious deed,  
Or I may fight one selfless bout,  
And, having done it, flicker out.

An otherwise admirable sonnet by R. Galletti-di-Cadilhac is marred by the intrusion of the exceedingly unpoetical word, "husky"—"quiet" would have met the case just as well. Guy Grist in 'Grey Evening' discovers a real feeling for nature and a fine faculty for observation.

Among the other poems of outstanding merit, mention should be made of 'Troy,' by J. R. V. Collins, 'Rain,' by W. G. Archer, and the three poems of Clerc Parsons. A brilliant career may be predicted for the last-named writer. He has unquestionably the roots of the matter in him.

## LLOYDS BANK LIMITED.



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(30th June, 1927.)

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| CAPITAL SUBSCRIBED | £73,302,076 |
| CAPITAL PAID UP    | 15,810,252  |
| RESERVE FUND       | 10,000,000  |
| DEPOSITS, &c.      | 353,934,406 |
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**Occupied Haiti.** Edited by Emily Balch. New York: The Writers' Publishing Company.

THOSE for whom out-of-the-way corners of the earth have a fascination will enjoy this little book, though they may not subscribe to the conclusions of Miss Balch and her collaborators. Haiti occupies the western half of San Domingo, the most considerable island in the West Indies, Cuba excepted. It has been a negro Republic for over a century, latterly under the occupation of the United States. It is not one of those happy lands that have no history, for its freedom has been one long tale of turmoil and trouble, but on a very small scale. Here one may examine the actions and reactions of Western and West African civilizations. It is a strange jumble of human psychology. Colour, not wealth, is the preponderant influence. It is all very well to reprobate the white man who looks down on his black fellow because of his skin, but what is one to say of a man of a rich chocolate brown who sneers at his neighbour because he is a couple of shades darker. It is an interesting problem not yet solved anywhere.

**Amateurs Afloat.** By H. Ian MacIver. Hopkinson. 12s. 6d.

MR. MACIVER began with motor-launches, as many amateur yachtsmen do nowadays; but tiring of these—again not an uncommon experience—he took to sail, and, among other successes, twice won the "midnight race" from the Mersey to the Isle of Man. The war intervening, he had a varied experience of active service afloat, serving for some time on the "examination" boats off Liverpool, and ending up as first officer on a minesweeper in the North Sea—an unusually high post for an amateur. All this was nervous work. The examination of strange vessels entering harbour had to be done in any kind of weather from small boats, and was often exceedingly dangerous; while, as for the mine-sweeping, Mr. MacIver well remarks that but for that happy human faculty for ignoring anything we are accustomed to, the crews of these vessels must invariably have ended in the madhouse. As it was, "but few of our navigators were able to survive for more than three weeks without suffering severe nervous breakdown." The war over, Mr. MacIver is back again off the west coast, with sail, motor, and sometimes steam, and with many of his former crew. He is always getting into difficulties, and out of them, and in this quiet, detailed account of his many experiences, yachtsmen of all kinds will find something to interest them. On the technical side, the book is quite excellent.

## MOTORING

By H. THORNTON RUTTER

AT the present moment, the experimental workshops or departments of the European and American factories are busy on two subjects: an improved gear box and improved chassis lubrication. The aim of the automobile engineer is to provide a gear box which presents no difficulty to the novice in changing the different ratios of speeds, and the engineers' desire in chassis lubrication is to evolve a scheme whereby the ordinary car-owner, without any technical knowledge, can, with the minimum of effort and with perfect freedom from dirt, renew the lubrication to all the necessary parts of the mechanism. There is a number of designs at present to be tried out, some have even got so far as to be incorporated on one or two chassis, which have come into the hands of the public, in order to see whether this larger field of users could discover further faults which might have been missed by the designer and manufacturer. Private motorists, and possibly even the paid chauffeur, will welcome the "one shot" lubrication if it successfully lubricates the various points of the chassis which need attention in detail, as it simplifies the operation. There are often something like thirty to fifty oiling spots on the ordinary motor carriage, most of which have to be separately attended to by the aid of the grease gun, the said grease gun being occasionally charged with oil instead of with grease, for which it was originally designed.

\*

\*

That is another item which is being altered in the modern chassis, oil taking the place of heavier and thicker grease. One of the latest ideas that have been evolved is to fit the chassis with an oil tank, and from there run a convenient set of piping to the various points in the chassis, or arrange for the lubricant to be delivered first to a distributor and

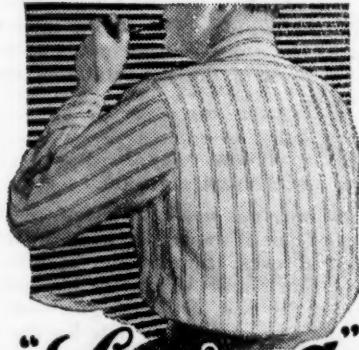
thence to the bearings and joints of the vehicle. What is really very much needed at present is a system which also lubricates the leaves of the springs; these are sadly neglected by every car owner—and by the paid chauffeur also—until the squeaks which emanate from them are so loud that they annoy the driver, or the owner, and induce him to give them the attention which should have been administered many weeks previously.

\* \* \*

With the "one shot" system, a reservoir of oil and a small plunger pump worked by hand, either by the occupant of the driving seat or perhaps the passenger, forces oil to all the necessary points, but unless oil ways are put into the springs, it is not evident how they are going to be lubricated except by the present crude method of thrusting a piece of metal to prise the leaves apart and then putting graphite grease or some similar substance into the interstices.

\* \* \*

Some inventor conceived the idea of letting the motion of the chassis, or its shaking on the road, act as a force pump to oil the necessary parts. The owner of such a car had only to fill the tank containing the main supply of oil occasionally and leave the rest of the lubrication to be provided automatically by the car itself as it ran. However, so far I have not seen any development of this idea, further than the laboratory. Whether the future will bring it into the realms of practical commerce is open to doubt; if there is any system that requires to be positive in its action, it is lubrication. There must be no misfire about this, or great damage is done.



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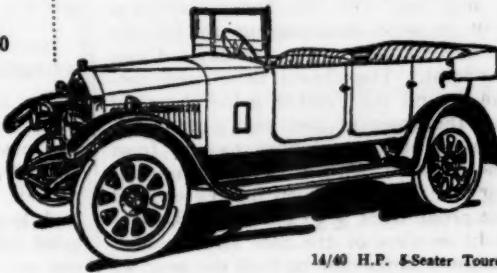
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## CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

TAKING the view in my opening paragraph last week that the tendency the world over was in the direction of easier money, with special reference to the United States, I happened to be anticipating at the time of writing the reduction in the leading rediscount rate of that country, i.e., of the New York Federal Reserve Bank. On the whole, although there are, of course, those who argue that the state of brokers' loans hardly warrants encouragement in the direction of easy money, the reduction comes at a favourable time locally. Moreover it should have a helpful effect here, as surplus funds were early spoken of as being transferred from New York to participate in the higher earning power on this side, and an improving tone in sterling is apparently a manifestation of this development. At the moment, with the autumn coming, one devoutly hopes that the authorities will be able to carry on without an advance in our bank rate, for, as most of us realize, much depends on favourable credit.

## D. NAPIER AND SON

Napier and Son, specializing in the manufacture of aero-engines, might reasonably be considered as a progressive company, seeing that it is associated with an industry as yet but in its infancy. It will hardly be disputed that big developments will come in connexion with our control of the air as a medium for transportation, and it is therefore feasible to infer that the future of D. Napier and Son is reasonably assured. The company turns out the finest type of aero-engine obtainable and has considerable sales for it overseas. Profits for the year to September last were not so good as for the previous year; the respective figures were £201,794 and £237,542, the decline being accounted for by industrial troubles. Now that industry generally is more settled the company should go ahead well, a suggestion that seems to be borne out by the steady improvement in the price of the shares. The financial position is first class.

## CAIRN LINE SHARES

Remembering only too well the severe post-war shipping slump, it is most encouraging to see the interest taken in our shipping issues to-day. Cairn Line is a case in point. The shares have risen considerably, so that around the current price the yield is very modest on the basis of last year's dividend. The company is a well-known shipper to and from Canada and this country, with a service running between Hamburg and Canada. 1926 figures showed an increase in net profit from £50,200 to £58,900—a good achievement in view of the coal strike which coincided with the most important part of the year so far as the company is concerned.

Seven years ago the company had five steamers; to-day it has nine, with a total tonnage of well over 45,000 tons gross. The company has followed a sound depreciation policy and the financial position appears to be sound and healthy. There is some talk of an interesting amalgamation between this line and powerful railway interests; but the outlook in the normal way is quite attractive.

## WINTERBOTTOM BOOK CLOTH

A company which showed an excellent balance sheet for the year to December 31 last is Winterbottom Book Cloth—a concern that not only manufactures bookbinders' cloth but cotton fabrics of various descriptions. In addition to its British interests Winterbottom Book Cloth has works established in America. Distributions on the ordinary shares are in the form of dividend and bonus tax free, 17½ and 7½% being distributed in 1926 against 12½ and 3½% in 1923. Profits in 1922 were £247,400 and for 1926 £349,300. The issued capital is £2,186,440, of which £998,100 is in ordinary shares. The company's income from invested moneys is considerable, the income derivable therefrom being within a little of £67,000 for 1926 against £30,800 in 1921. Cash at the end of last year was £371,800 and the carry forward was substantial at £119,600. The whole financial position is very strong and the shares are to be suggested as a sound investment for income.

## RUBBER

The rubber position continues to be decidedly intriguing, and requires careful consideration of the pros and cons before one ventures on investment in the industry. The use of rubber certainly continues on a considerable scale in the United States, and it is stated that in spite of increasing amounts of "reclaimed" brought into use, consumption of the pure article steadily mounts up. Again, there is a well-defined broadening of the European market in motor-car manufacture—in Germany, for example, where the home manufacturers are busy and where potentialities are quite exceptional. Restriction is weakened by the lack of co-operation by the Dutch, but nevertheless is a sure-grinding if slow mill, and there is, additionally, the rapid decrease of that bugbear the unissued coupon. The strongest point for rubber to-day, in my opinion, is the fact that producers have been so scared in the past that nothing like the wastage that should have been made good has been, and replanting is still far below needs suggested by normal increases a few years ahead. Hence the argument that a rubber shortage by 1930 or so is inevitable seems reasonable enough. Shares are still hard to obtain and the market is such that even a moderate demand gives the broker a difficult task to get his orders executed satisfactorily.

## RUBBER SHARES

For income, the companies to follow are those that have been fortunate enough to sell well forward in the past, when rubber was high. Of such Grand Central with large forward sales in the region of 2s. 6d., United Serdang with sales forward at 2s. 3d., and Rembau Jelei sold forward around 2s. 2d., are good and interesting shares. United Sua Betong is one of the finest companies, but has only a small amount of rubber sold forward. Of the smaller fry Baling looks to me a share that should do well if rubber is to come into its own and gain stability in two or three years, because the company has maintained a progressive replanting policy. Johore River is a useful counter. Others are Bukit Nilai, Sungai Tiram, with Kuala Kran to be bought at the low price of about 1s. 3d. Mendaris is a good all-round share.

TAURUS

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## HISTORICAL INCIDENTS

### Mary's Escape from Loch Leven

FTER surrender to the confederate lords at Carberry, Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle. Within the year Mary effected her escape, helped by a youth of eighteen, Willy Douglas, who stole the Castle keys while the stern gaoler was at supper. He then rowed the Queen with her waiting women to the shore. There is no more appealing figure in history than Mary—helpless, luckless, fascinating, buffeted about by rude fortune, her worst enemy herself. Her fate would have been a very different one had she had the foresight and character to steer a straight instead of a vacillating course through life.

Times are now less rough for unprotected women, who no longer need be the playthings of chance. With careers open to them they can be their own best friends: they can work in their youth and have the foresight and character to provide for their old age. The best provision they can make is an ENDOWMENT ASSURANCE POLICY at 55 or 60 with

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The Debts Problem and Its International Aspect BERNARD DESOUCHES

An Indictment of Christian Missions—A Reply Dr. TINGFRANG LEW

Notes from Paris

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CHARLES PETRIE

The Action Francaise LETTY STACK

Ballads L. EATON SMITH

Nozze d'Argento PEREGRINE PICKLE

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"Says Sergeant Murphy" A. P. GARLAND

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The Tribute HANNAH BERMAN

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### Company Meeting

### UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC RAILWAYS COMPANY OF LONDON, LIMITED

AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the holders of the 6 per cent. income bonds of the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Ltd., was held on August 5 at Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., for the purpose of considering proposals modifying the rights of the holders of the income bonds in terms already made public.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Ashfield, P.C. (chairman of the Company), presiding, said: Unfortunately, the necessary quorum is not present this morning, and by the terms of the trust deed the meeting stands adjourned to Friday, August 26, at the same time and place, when those present will be a quorum. But while I shall not to-day be able to submit the resolutions for your decision, I feel that I shall be consulting your wishes if I make my statement now instead of at the adjourned meeting.

Let me first of all recapitulate the changes in the conditions attaching to the 6 per cent. bonds, for which the directors of the company desire your sanction. These are:—

(a) The 6 per cent. interest payable upon the bonds, instead of being paid without deduction of British income-tax, is to be paid subject to deduction of that tax;

(b) The bonds are to be exchangeable at the holder's option at any time within two years for ordinary shares, such ordinary shares being regarded for the purpose of exchange as worth 22s. per share;

(c) The Company renounces its right to redeem the bonds during such two years, and for eight years thereafter can only redeem them at a premium of 3 per cent. instead of at par;

(d) Provision is made for the issue of further bonds or debentures in priority to the income bonds, on condition that further assets with an adequate margin are brought into charge for such prior issue, and for the withdrawal of assets from the charge securing the income bonds as the amount of those bonds is reduced by conversion into ordinary shares or cancellation for any other reason.

As you perhaps know, the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Limited, was incorporated on April 9, 1902, and had for its objects the construction of new underground railways in London and the electrification of an existing line. In 1914 it ceased to be a construction company and became a company holding stocks and shares in the various Underground Railway Companies.

In 1903, the year after its inception, it issued in London and New York £7,000,000 profit-sharing secured notes with the object of providing temporary financial facilities for the construction work it had undertaken.

It was originally expected that before these notes matured the work of construction would have been finished and the operations of the railways would have become profitable, so that the notes could then have been replaced by some form of permanent capital. But these hopes were not sufficiently realized, and when the notes matured in 1908 it became necessary to issue new securities consisting of:—

£1,000,000 5 per cent. tax free prior lien bonds, due to mature in 1920, but which were, in fact, paid off in 1911.

£2,800,000 4½ per cent. tax free bonds due to mature in 1933.

£4,900,000 6 per cent. tax free income bonds, due to mature in 1948.

Further 6 per cent. income bonds were issued in 1909, 1912, and 1914, chiefly in connection with the acquisition of the London General Omnibus Company, making up a total of £6,330,050 of these bonds issued and outstanding at the present time.

In 1913 the interest on the bonds was paid in full, and I have no hesitancy in saying that but for the war the financial position of your company would, in my opinion, have become such as to justify the directors in taking steps, certainly not later than 1915, either to redeem the bonds or modify their terms. But, as I have already said, the war intervened, and while the company, largely because of the incidence of the income-tax and the value of sterling in New York, has not paid the full interest on the bonds each year, the average rate of interest paid for the last ten years has been 6.85 per cent.

At the annual meeting of your company in March last I ventured to predict that the results for the current year would show an improvement over those of last year, and the results for the first six months have fulfilled my prediction.

I trust you will agree that your directors are warranted in taking an optimistic view of the future of your company, for the work in which the companies have been engaged since the war, of improving and consolidating their position, is bringing its reward, and we look forward to an era of increased income to the Underground Company.

As I have already said, since we lack a quorum, no decision can be taken to-day. The meeting must, therefore, stand adjourned until Friday, August 26, at 12 o'clock noon, at this same place, when I shall take steps to carry these alterations into effect. I venture to hope that at that time you will find it convenient to attend the meeting, or, failing that, to deposit your acceptances in favour of the scheme modified, as I have indicated this morning.

An informal discussion followed, and, the chairman having replied to questions raised, the meeting stood adjourned.

## ACROSTICS

## PUBLISHER'S PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem is set, presented by the publisher.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 282  
(Twelfth of the 20th Quarter.)

GROWING IN GARDENS WE ARE FOUND  
AT NO GREAT DISTANCE FROM THE GROUND;  
IN PIES AND PUDDINGS, TOO, WE'RE SEEN.  
OUR COLOURS: YELLOW, RED, OR GREEN.

1. He'd be more slothful, should you guillotine him.
2. They call him Melo, but I've never seen him.
3. An English town surpassed by none in beauty.
4. To separate himself he thinks a duty.
5. Lasting,—but, sir, the hoop can be dispensed with!
6. He was a fell one to be fought or fenced with!
7. Speaks in Kick Session—sure, in *pithy* phrases.
8. The hugeness of this tropic flower amazes.
9. Rob me of this—my dearest friends may fail me!
10. A sea-port in a neighbouring isle curtail me.

## Solution of Acrostic No. 280

|   |             |           |
|---|-------------|-----------|
| V | eno         | M         |
| I | nfr         | A         |
| R | ave         | R         |
| G | arrulit     | Y         |
| I | mmateria    | L         |
| N | ostalgi     | A         |
| A | Illuminatio | N         |
|   |             | Drianople |

ACROSTIC NO. 280.—The winner is Sir C. Des Graz, The Firs, Copse Hill, Wimbledon, S.W.20, who has selected as his prize 'The Battle Book of Ypres,' compiled by Beatrix Brice, published by Murray, and reviewed in our columns on July 30. Thirty-four other competitors chose this book, nineteen named 'Thomas Love Peacock,' ten 'Constantinople,' nine 'Dark Ann,' etc., etc.

ALSO CORRECT.—Baldersby, Mrs. J. Butler, Mrs. Ruth Carrick, Ceyx, Chailey, Chip, Dolmar, Reginald P. Eccles, Cyril E. Ford, Gay, Hanworth, H. C. M., Margaret, Martha, Met, G. W. Miller, N. O. Sellam, Oakapple, Peter, Quis, R. Ransom, Sisyphus, Hon. R. G. Talbot, Trike.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—Armadale, Barber, Bolo, Mrs. Rosa H. Boothroyd, Boskerris, Mrs. Robt. Brown, J. Chambers, Dhuault, Dona, Sir Reginald Egerton, C. Ellis, Farsdon, G. M. Fowler, Rev. E. P. Gatty, Anthony George, Glamis, W. Ernest Groves, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Wolseley Haig, Jeff, John Lennie, Mrs. A. Lole, Madge, A. M. W. Maxwell, P. A. Maxwell, Lady Mottram, Rabbits, Shorwell, St. Ives, C. G. Tosswill, R. H. S. Truell, Twyford, H. M. Vaughan, C. J. Warden, Captain W. R. Wolseley, Yendu.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG.—Bertram, C. H. Burton, Rev. H. F. B. Compston, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, W. R. Dunstan, Iago, Lilian, Parvus, Dr. James Pearse, Rand, Red Cot, Stucco. All others more.

ACROSTIC NO. 279.—One Light wrong: A. de V. Blathwayt, Met, Oakapple. Two wrong: Boskerris, Coque, Farsdon, M. I. R., Peter, Stucco.

OUR 20TH QUARTERLY COMPETITION.—After the Tenth Round the leaders are: Margaret; Sisyphus; Baldersby, N. O. Sellam, Hon. R. G. Talbot; Mrs. Ruth Carrick, Gay, Madge, Peter; Mrs. J. Butler, Iago, John Lennie, Oakapple, C. J. Warden; Boskerris, Lilian, St. Ives, Trike; Armadale.

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